

# Hianatha

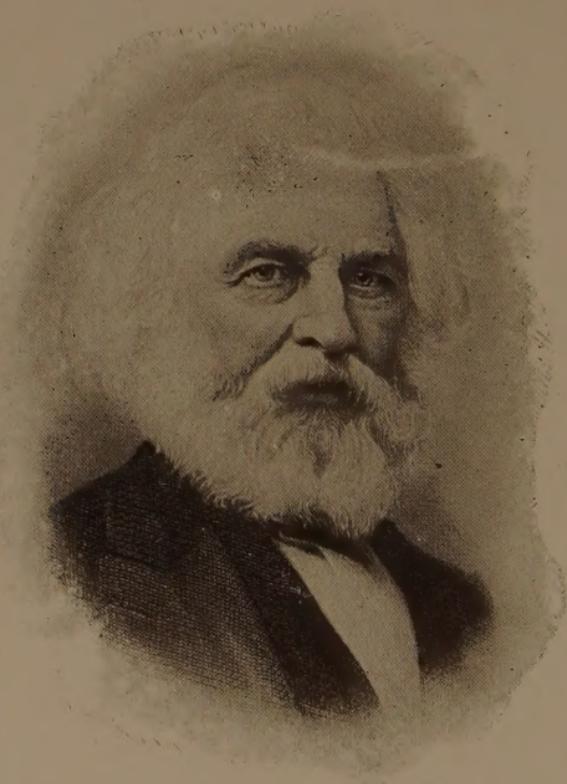












Henry W. Longfellow

THE SONG  
OF  
HIAWATHA

*By* HENRY  
WADSWORTH  
LONGFELLOW



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**SONG OF HIAWATHA,**  
BY  
**HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW**  
—  
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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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The Song of Hiawatha first appeared in 1855. In it Mr. Longfellow has woven together the beautiful traditions of the American Indians into one grand and delightful epic poem. The melodies of its rhythm and measure flow from his classic pen in unison with the hoof-beats of the bison, the tremulous thunder of the Falls of Minnehaha, the paddle strokes of the Indian canoeist, and he has done more to immortalize in song and story the life and environments of the red man of America than any other writer, save perhaps J. Fenimore Cooper. It was from a perusal of the Finnish epic "Kalevala" that both the measure and the style of "Hiawatha" was suggested to Mr. Longfellow. In fact, it might appropriately be named the "Kalevala" of North America. Mr. Longfellow derived his knowledge of Indian legends from Schoolcraft's Algic Researches and other books, from Heckewelder's Narratives, from Black Hawk, with his display of Sacs and Foxes on Boston Common, and from the Ojibway chief, Kahge-ga-gab-bowh, whom he entertained at his own home.

**INTRODUCTORY NOTE.**

*T*iawatha had a wide circulation, both in America and Europe, and was universally admired by readers and critics on both Continents. Large audiences gathered to hear it read by public readers. It was set to music by Stoepel, and at the Boston Theater it was rendered with explanatory readings by the famous elocutionist, Matilda Heron. The highest encomiums were passed upon it by such critics of ripe scholarship as Emerson and Hawthorne. A part of it was translated into Latin and used as an academic text book. Those who wish to read more about it will find interest and pleasure in perusing the masterly criticisms of Dr. O. W. Holmes in the Annals of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and that of Horatio Hale in the Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1881.



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## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

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### INTRODUCTION.



HOULD you ask me,  
whence these stories?  
Whence these legends and  
traditions,  
With the odors of the forest,  
With the dew and damp of  
meadows,  
With the curling smoke of  
wigwams,                       5  
With the rushing of great  
rivers,  
With their frequent repetitions,

And their wild reverberations,  
As of thunder in the mountains?

I should answer, I should tell you,      10  
“From the forests and the prairies,  
From the great lakes of the Northland,  
From the land of the Ojibways,  
From the land of the Dacotahs,  
From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands, 15  
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.  
I repeat them as I heard them  
From the lips of Nawadaha,  
The musician, the sweet singer.”      20

Should you ask where Nawadaha  
Found these songs so wild and wayward,  
Found these legends and traditions,  
I should answer, I should tell you,  
“In the bird’s-nests of the forest,      25  
In the lodges of the beaver,  
In the hoof-prints of the bison,  
In the eyry of the eagle!

“All the wild-fowl sang them to him,  
In the moorlands and the fen-lands,      30  
In the melancholy marshes;  
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,

Mahn, the loon, the wild goose, Wawa,  
 The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah  
 And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!"

35

If still further you should ask me,  
 Saying, "Who was Nawadaha?  
 Tell us of this Nawadaha,"  
 I should answer your inquiries  
 Straightway in such words as follow.

40

"In the Vale of Tawasentha,  
 In the green and silent valley,  
 By the pleasant water-courses,  
 Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.

Round about the Indian village  
 Spread the meadows and the cornfields,  
 And beyond them stood the forest,  
 Stood the groves of singing pine-trees,  
 Green in Summer, white in Winter,  
 Ever sighing, ever singing.

45

"And the pleasant water-courses,  
 You could trace them through the valley,  
 By the rushing in the Spring-time,  
 By the alders in the Summer,  
 By the white fog in the Autumn,  
 By the black line in the Winter;  
 And beside them dwelt the singer,

55

In the vale of Tawasentha,  
In the green and silent valley.

"There he sang of Hiawatha,  
Sang the Song of Hiawatha,  
Sang his wondrous birth and being,  
How he prayed and how he fasted,  
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,  
That the tribes of men might prosper,  
That he might advance his people!"

60

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,  
Love the sunshine of the meadow,  
Love the shadow of the forest,  
Love the wind among the branches,  
And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,  
And the rushing of great rivers  
Through their palisades of pine-trees,  
And the thunder in the mountains,  
Whose innumerable echoes  
Flap like eagles in their eyries;—  
Listen to these wild traditions,  
To this Song of Hiawatha!

70

75

Ye who love a nation's legends,  
Love the ballads of a people,  
That like voices from afar off  
Call to us to pause and listen,

8c

## INTRODUCTION.

II

Speak in tones so plain and childlike,  
Scarcely can the ear distinguish  
Whether they are sung or spoken;—  
Listen to this Indian Legend,  
To this Song of Hiawatha!

85

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,  
Who have faith in God and Nature,  
Who believe that in all ages  
Every human heart is human,  
That in even savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings  
For the good they comprehend not,  
That the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch God's right hand in that darkness,  
And are lifted up and strengthened;—  
Listen to this simple story,  
To this song of Hiawatha!

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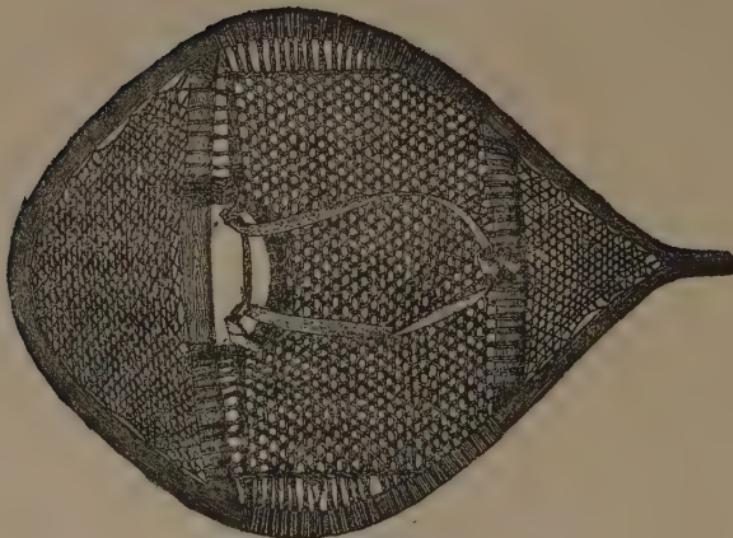
Ye who sometimes, in your rambles  
Through the green lanes of the country,  
Where the tangled barberry-bushes  
Hang their tufts of crimson berries  
Over stone walls gray with mosses,  
Pause by some neglected graveyard,  
For a while to muse, and ponder

105

On a half-effaced inscription,  
Written with little skill of song-craft,  
Homely phrases, but each letter  
Full of hope and yet of heart-break,  
Full of all the tender pathos  
Of the Here and the Hereafter;—  
Stay and read this rude inscription,  
Read this song of Hiawatha!

110

115



*Ojibway Snow Shoe.*



"Smoked the Calumet, the Peace-Pipe."

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## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

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### I.

#### THE PEACE-PIPE.

N the Mountains of the  
Prairie,  
On the great Red Pipe-  
stone Quarry,  
Gitche Manitou, the  
mighty,

He the Master of Life, descending,  
On the red crags of the quarry  
Stood erect, and called the nations,  
Called the tribes of men together.

From his footprints flowed a river,  
Leaped into the light of morning,  
O'er the precipice plunging downward

5

10

Gleamed like Ishkoodah, the comet.  
And the Spirit, stooping earthward,  
With his finger on the meadow  
Traced a winding pathway for it,  
Saying to it, "Run in this way!"

15

From the red stone of the quarry  
With his hand he broke a fragment,  
Moulded it into a pipe-head,  
Shaped and fashioned it with figures;  
From the margin of the river  
Took a long reed for a pipe-stem,  
With its dark green leaves upon it,  
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,  
With the bark of the red willow;  
Breathed upon the neighboring forest,  
Made its great boughs chafe together,  
Till in flame they burst and kindled;  
And erect upon the mountains,  
Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
Smoked the calumet, the Peace-Pipe,  
As a signal to the nations.

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And the smoke rose slowly, slowly,  
Through the tranquil air of morning,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

15

First a single line of darkness,  
Then a denser, bluer vapor,  
Then a snow-white cloud unfolding,  
Like the tree-tops of the forest,  
Ever rising, rising, rising,  
Till it touched the top of heaven,  
Till it broke against the heaven,  
And rolled outward all around it.

35

From the Vale of Tawasentha,  
From the Valley of Wyoming,  
From the groves of Tuscaloosa,  
From the far-off Rocky Mountains,  
From the Northern lakes and rivers,  
All the tribes beheld the signal,  
Saw the distant smoke ascending,  
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe.

45

And the Prophets of the nations  
Said: "Behold it, the Pukwana!  
By this signal from afar off,  
Bending like a wand of willow,  
Waving like a hand that beckons,  
Gitche Manitou, the mighty,  
Calls the tribes of men together,  
Calls the warriors to his council!"  
Down the rivers, o'er the prairies,

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55

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Came the warriors of the nations,  
Came the Delawares and Mohawks,  
Came the Choctaws and Camanches,  
Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet,  
Came the Pawnees and Omahas,  
Came the Mandans and Dacotahs,  
Came the Hurons and Ojibways,  
All the warriors drawn together  
By the signal of the Peace-Pipe,  
To the Mountains of the Prairie,  
To the great Red Pipe-stone Quarry.

61

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And they stood there on the meadow,  
With their weapons and their war-gear,  
Painted like the leaves of Autumn,  
Painted like the sky of morning,  
Wildly glaring at each other;  
In their faces stern defiance,  
In their hearts the feuds of ages,  
The hereditary hatred,  
The ancestral thirst of vengeance.

75

Gitche Manito, the mighty,  
The creator of the nations,  
Looked upon them with compassion,  
With paternal love and pity;  
Looked upon their wrath and wrangling

80

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

47

'But as quarrels among children,  
But as feuds and fights of children! 85

Over them he stretched his right hand,  
To subdue their stubborn natures,  
To allay their thirst and fever,  
By the shadow of his right hand;  
Spake to them with voice majestic 90  
As the sound of far-off waters  
Falling into deep abysses,  
Warning, chiding, spake in this wise:—  
"O my children! my poor children!

Listen to the words of wisdom, 95  
Listen to the words of warning,  
From the lips of the Great Spirit,  
From the Master of Life, who made you!

"I have given you lands to hunt in,  
I have given you streams to fish in, 100  
I have given you bear and bison,  
I have given you roe and reindeer,  
I have given you brant and beaver,  
Filled the marshes full of wild fowl,  
Filled the rivers full of fishes;  
Why then are you not contented?  
Why then will you hunt each other? 105  
"I am weary of your quarrels,

Weary of your wars and bloodshed,  
Weary of your prayers for vengeance,  
Of your wranglings and dissensions;  
All your strength is in your union,  
All your danger is in discord;  
Therefore be at peace henceforward,  
And as brothers live together.

114

115

“I will send a Prophet to you,  
A Deliverer of the nations,  
Who shall guide you and shall teach you,  
Who shall toil and suffer with you.  
If you listen to his counsels,  
You will multiply and prosper;  
If his warnings pass unheeded,  
You will fade away and perish!

120

“Bathe now in the stream before you,  
Wash the war-paint from your faces,      125  
Wash the blood-stains from your fingers,  
Bury your war-clubs and your weapons,  
Break the red stone from this quarry,  
Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes,  
Take the reeds that grow beside you,      130  
Deck them with your brightest feathers,  
Smoke the calumet together,  
And as brothers live henceforward!”

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

19

Then upon the ground the warriors  
Threw their cloaks and shirts of deer-skin, 135  
Threw their weapons and their war-gear,  
Leaped into the rushing river,  
Washed the war-paint from their faces.  
Clear above them flowed the water,  
Clear and limpid from the footprints 140  
Of the Master of Life descending;  
Dark below them flowed the water,  
Soiled and stained with streaks of crimson,  
As if blood were mingled with it!

From the river came the warriors, 145  
Clean and washed from all their war-paint;  
On the banks their clubs they buried,  
Buried all their warlike weapons,  
Gitche Manitou, the mighty,  
The Great Spirit, the creator, 150  
Smiled upon his helpless children!

And in silence all the warriors  
Broke the red stone of the quarry,  
Smoothed and formed it into Peace-Pipes,  
Broke the long reeds by the river, 155  
Decked them with their brightest feathers,  
And departed each one homeward,  
While the Master of Life, ascending,

Through the opening of cloud-curtains,  
Through the doorways of the heaven, 160  
Vanished from before their faces,  
In the smoke that rolled around him,  
The Pukwana of the Peace-Pipe!



"Break the red stone from this quarry,  
Mould and make it into Peace-Pipes."



"I have given you bear and bison."

---



## II.

### THE FOUR WINDS.

ONOR be to Mudje-  
keewis!"  
Cried the warriors,  
cried the old  
men,

When he came in triumph homeward  
With the sacred Belt of Wampum,  
From the regions of the North-Wind,  
From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
From the land of the White Rabbit.

5

He had stolen the Belt of Wampum  
From the neck of Mishe-Mokwa,  
From the Great Bear of the mountains,      10  
From the terror of the nations,  
As he lay asleep and cumbrous  
On the summit of the mountains,  
Like a rock with mosses on it,  
Spotted brown and gray with mosses.      15

Silently he stole upon him,  
Till the red nails of the monster  
Almost touched him, almost scared him.  
Till the hot breath of his nostrils  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis,      20  
As he drew the Belt of Wampum  
Over the round ears, that heard not,  
Over the small eyes, that saw not,  
Over the long nose and nostrils,  
The black muffle of the nostrils,      25  
Out of which the heavy breathing  
Warmed the hands of Mudjekeewis.

Then he swung aloft his war-club,  
Shouted loud and long his war-cry,  
Smote the mighty Mishe-Mokwa      30  
In the middle of the forehead,  
Right between the eyes he smote him.

With the heavy blow bewildered,  
Rose the Great Bear of the mountains;  
But his knees beneath him trembled,  
And he whimpered like a woman,  
As he reeled and staggered forward,  
As he sat upon his haunches;  
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,  
Standing fearlessly before him,  
Taunted him in loud derision,  
Spake disdainfully in this wise:—

“Hark you, Bear! you are a coward,  
And no Brave, as you pretended;  
Else you would not cry and whimper  
Like a miserable woman!

Bear! you know our tribes are hostile,  
Long have been at war together;  
Now you find that we are strongest,  
You go sneaking in the forest,  
You go hiding in the mountains!

Had you conquered me in battle  
Not a groan would I have uttered;  
But you, Bear! sit here and whimper,  
And disgrace your tribe by crying,  
Like a wretched Shaugodaya,

Like a cowardly old woman!”

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Then again he raised his war-club,  
Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa  
In the middle of his forehead,  
Broke his skull, as ice is broken  
When one goes to fish in Winter.  
Thus was slain the Mishe-Mokwa,  
He the Great Bear of the mountains,  
He the terror of the nations.

63

“Honor be to Mudjekeewis!”  
With a shout exclaimed the people,  
“Honor be to Mudjekeewis!  
Henceforth he shall be the West-Wind,  
And hereafter and forever  
Shall he hold supreme dominion  
Over all the winds of heaven.  
Call him no more Mudjekeewis,  
Call him Kabeyun, the West-Wind!”

70

Thus was Mudjekeewis chosen  
Father of the Winds of Heaven.  
For himself he kept the West-Wind,  
Gave the others to his children;  
Unto Wabun gave the East-Wind,  
Gave the South to Shawondasee,  
And the North-Wind, wild and cruel,  
To the fierce Kabibonokka.

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80

Young and beautiful was Wabun;  
He it was who brought the morning,  
He it was whose silver arrows  
Chased the dark o'er hill and valley;  
He it was whose cheeks were painted  
With the brightest streaks of crimson,  
And whose voice awoke the village,  
Called the deer, and called the hunter.

85

90

Lonely in the sky was Wabun;  
Though the birds sang gayly to him,  
Though the wild-flowers of the meadow  
Filled the air with odors for him,  
Though the forests and the rivers  
Sang and shouted at his coming,  
Still his heart was sad within him,  
For he was alone in heaven.

95

But one morning, gazing earthward,  
While the village still was sleeping,  
And the fog lay on the river,  
Like a ghost, that goes at sunrise,  
He beheld a maiden walking  
All alone upon a meadow,  
Gathering water-flags and rushes  
By a river in the meadow.

100

105

Every morning, gazing earthward,

Still the first thing he beheld there  
Was her blue eyes looking at him,  
Two blue lakes among the rushes.  
And he loved the lonely maiden,  
Who thus waited for his coming;  
For they both were solitary,  
She on earth and he in heaven.

110

And he wooed her with caresses,  
Wooed her with his smile of sunshine,  
With his flattering words he wooed her,  
With his sighing and his singing,  
Gentlest whispers in the branches,  
Softest music, sweetest odors,  
Till he drew her to his bosom,  
Folded in his robes of crimson,  
Till into a star he changed her,  
Trembling still upon his bosom;  
And forever in the heavens  
They are seen together walking,  
Waban and the Wabun-Annung,  
Wabun and the Star of Morning.

115

120

125

But the fierce Kabibonokka  
Had his dwelling among icebergs,  
In the everlasting snow-drifts,  
In the kingdom of Wabasso,

130

In the land of the White Rabbit.  
He it was whose hand in Autumn  
Painted all the trees with scarlet,      135  
Stained the leaves with red and yellow;  
He it was who sent the snow-flakes,  
Sifting, hissing through the forest,  
Froze the ponds, the lakes, the rivers,  
Drove the loon and sea-gull southward,      140  
Drove the cormorant and curlew  
To their nests of sedge and sea-tang  
In the realms of Shawondasee.

Once the fierce Kabibonokka  
Issued from his lodge of snow-drifts,      145  
From his home among the icebergs,  
And his hair, with snow besprinkled,  
Streamed behind him like a river,  
Like a black and wintry river,  
As he howled and hurried southward,      150  
Over frozen lakes and moorlands.

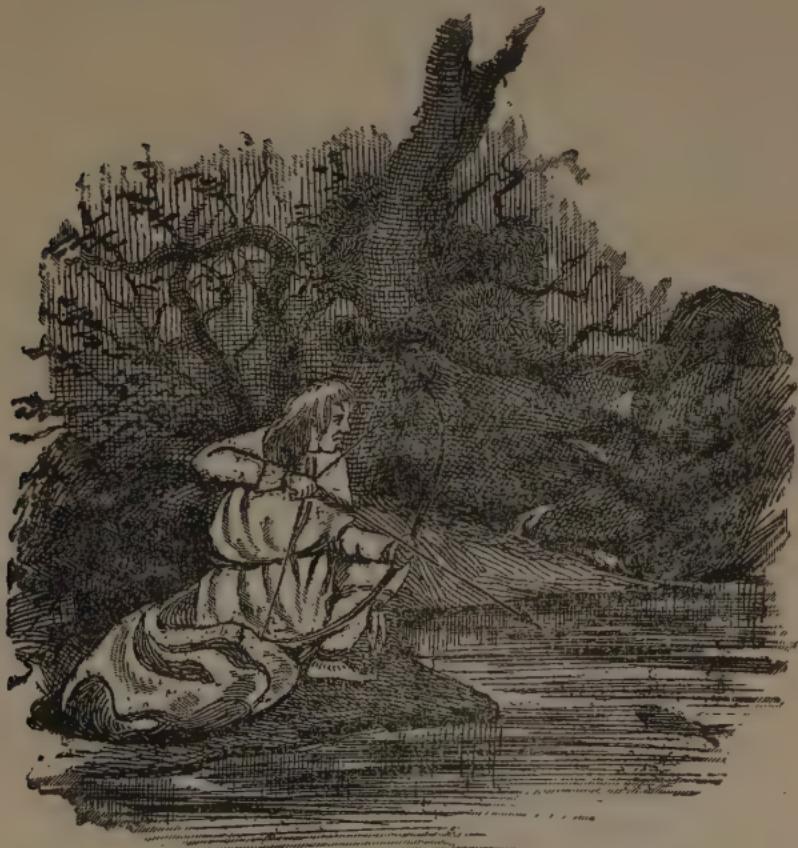
There among the reeds and rushes  
Found he Shingebis, the diver,  
Trailing strings of fish behind him,  
O'er the frozen fens and moorlands,      155  
Lingering still among the moorlands,  
Though his tribe had long departed

To the land of Shawondasee.  
Cried the fierce Kabibonokka,  
“Who is this that dares to brave me?      160  
Dares to stay in my dominions,  
When the Wawa has departed,  
When the wild-goose has gone southward,  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Long ago departed southward?      165  
I will go into his wigwam,  
I will put his smouldering fire out!”  
And at night Kabibonokka  
To the lodge came wild and wailing,  
Heaped the snow in drifts about it,      170  
Shouted down into the smoke-flue,  
Shook the lodge-poles in his fury,  
Flapped the curtain of the door-way.  
Shingebis, the diver, feared not,  
Shingebis, the diver, cared not;      175  
Four great logs had he for fire-wood,  
One for each moon of the winter,  
And for food the fishes served him.  
By his blazing fire he sat there,  
Warm and merry, eating, laughing,      180  
Singing, “O Kabibonokka,  
You are but my fellow-mortal!”

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

26

Then Kabibonokka entered,  
And though Shingebis, the diver,



"I have given you streams to fish in."  
Felt his presence by the coldness,  
Felt his icy breath upon him,

185

Still he did not cease his singing,  
Still he did not leave his laughing,  
Only turned the log a little,  
Only made the fire burn brighter,  
Made the sparks fly up the smoke-flue. 190

From Kabibonokka's forehead,  
From his snow-besprinkled tresses,  
Drops of sweat fell fast and heavy,  
Making dints upon the ashes, 195  
As along the eaves of lodges,  
As from drooping boughs of hemlock,  
Drips the melting snow in spring-time,  
Making hollows in the snow-drifts.

Till at last he rose defeated, 200  
Could not bear the heat and laughter,  
Could not bear the merry singing,  
But rushed headlong through the door-way,  
Stamped upon the crusted snow-drifts,  
Stamped upon the lakes and rivers, 205  
Made the snow upon them harder,  
Made the ice upon them thicker,  
Challenged Shingebis, the diver,  
To come forth and wrestle with him,  
To come forth and wrestle naked 210  
On the frozen fens and moorlands.

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

31

Forth went Shingebis, the diver,  
Wrestled all night with the North-Wind,  
Wrestled naked on the moorlands  
With the fierce Kabibonokka, 219  
Till his panting breath grew fainter,  
Till his frozen grasp grew feebler,  
Till he reeled and staggered backward,  
And retreated, baffled, beaten,  
To the kingdom of Wabasso, 220  
To the land of the White Rabbit,  
Hearing still the gusty laughter,  
Hearing Shingebis, the diver,  
Singing, "O Kabibonokka,  
You are but my fellow-mortal!" 225

Shawondasee, fat and lazy,—  
Had his dwelling far to southward,  
In the drowsy, dreamy sunshine,  
In the never-ending Summer.  
He it was who sent the wood-birds, 230  
Sent the Opechee, the robin,  
Sent the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
Sent the Shawshaw, sent the swallow,  
Sent the wild-goose, Wawa, northward,  
Sent the melons and tobacco, 235  
And the grapes in purple clusters.

32 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

From his pipe the smoke ascending  
Filled the sky with haze and vapor,  
Filled the air with dreamy softness,  
Gave a twinkle to the water. 240

Touched the rugged hills with smoothness,  
Brought the tender Indian Summer  
To the melancholy North-land,  
In the dreary Moon of Snow-shoes.

Listless, careless Shawondasee!  
In his life he had one shadow,  
In his heart one sorrow had he.  
Once, as he was gazing northward,

Far away upon a prairie  
He beheld a maiden standing, 250  
Saw a tall and slender maiden  
All alone upon a prairie;  
Brightest green were all her garments:  
And her hair was like the sunshine.

Day by day he gazed upon her,  
Day by day he sighed with passion,  
Day by day his heart within him  
Grew more hot with love and longing  
For the maid with yellow tresses.

But he was too fat and lazy 260  
To bestir himself and woo her;

Yes, too indolent and easy  
To pursue her and persuade her.  
So he only gazed upon her,  
Only sat and sighed with passion      265  
For the maiden of the prairie.

Till one morning, looking northward,  
He beheld her yellow tresses  
Changed and covered o'er with whiteness,  
Covered as with whitest snow-flakes.      270  
“Ah! my brother from the North-land,  
From the kingdom of Wabasso,  
From the land of the White Rabbit!  
You have stolen the maiden from me,  
You have laid your hand upon her,      275  
You have wooed and won my maiden,  
With your stories of the North-land!”

Thus the wretched Shawondasee  
Breathed into the air his sorrow;  
And the South-Wind o'er the prairie      280  
Wandered warm with sighs of passion,  
With the sighs of Shawondasee,  
Till the air seemed full of snow-flakes,  
Full of thistle-down the prairie,  
And the maid with hair like sunshine      285  
Vanished from his sight forever;

Never more did Shawondasee  
See the maid with yellow tresses!

Poor, deluded Shawondasee!

'T was no woman that you gazed at,      290  
'T was no maiden that you sighed for,  
'T was the prairie dandelion  
That through all the dreamy Summer  
You had gazed at with such longing,  
You had sighed for with such passion,      295  
And had puffed away forever,  
Blown into the air with sighing.  
Ah! deluded Shawondasee!

Thus the Four Winds were divided;  
Thus the sons of Mudjekeewis      300  
Had their stations in the heavens,  
At the corners of the heavens;  
For himself the West-Wind only  
Kept the mighty Mudjekeewis.



### III.

#### HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD.

OWNWARD through  
the evening twi-  
light,  
In the days that are  
forgotten,

In the unremembered ages,  
From the full moon fell Nokomis,  
Fell the beautiful Nokomis,  
She a wife but not a mother.

5

She was sporting with her women,  
Swinging in a swing of grape-vines,  
When her rival, the rejected,  
Full of jealousy and hatred,  
Cut the leafy swing asunder,

6

Cut in twain the twisted grape-vines,  
And Nokomis fell affrighted  
Downward through the evening twilight,  
On the Muskoday, the meadow,  
On the prairie full of blossoms.  
“See! a star falls!” said the people;  
“From the sky a star is falling!”

There among the ferns and mosses,  
There among the prairie lilies,  
On the Muskoday, the meadow,  
In the moonlight and the starlight,  
Fair Nokomis bore a daughter.  
And she called her name Wenonah,  
As the first-born of her daughters.  
And the daughter of Nokomis  
Grew up like the prairie lilies,  
Grew a tall and slender maiden,  
With the beauty of the moonlight,  
With the beauty of the starlight.

And Nokomis warned her often,  
Saying oft, and oft repeating,  
“Oh, beware of Mudjekeewis,  
Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis;  
Listen not to what he tells you;  
Lie not down upon the meadow,

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35

Stoop not down among the lilies,  
Lest the West-Wind come and harm you!"

But she heeded not the warning,  
Heeded not those words of wisdom. 40

And the West-Wind came at evening,  
Walking lightly o'er the prairie,

Whispering to the leaves and blossoms,  
Bending low the flowers and grasses,

Found the beautiful Wenonah, 45  
Lying there among the lilies,

Wooed her with his words of sweetness,  
Wooed her with his soft caresses,

Till she bore a son in sorrow,  
Bore a son of love and sorrow, 50

Thus was born my Hiawatha,  
Thus was born the child of wonder;

But the daughter of Nokomis,  
Hiawatha's gentle mother,

In her anguish died deserted  
By the West-Wind, false and faithless, 55

By the heartless Mudjekeewis.

For her daughter, long and loudly  
Wailed and wept the sad Nokomis;

"Oh that I were dead!" she murmured,  
"Oh that I were dead, as thou art!" 60

No more work, and no more weeping,  
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!"

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,  
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,  
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis  
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.  
Dark behind it rose the forest,  
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,  
Rose the firs with cones upon them;  
Bright before it beat the water,  
Beat the clear and sunny water,  
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled old Nokomis  
Nursed the little Hiawatha,  
Rocked him in his linden cradle,  
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,  
Safely bound with reindeer sinews;  
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,  
"Hush! the Naked Bear will hear thee!" 80  
Lulled him into slumber, singing,  
"Ewa-yea! my little owlet!  
Who is this, that lights the wigwam?  
With his great eyes lights the wigwam?  
Ewa-yea! my little owlet!"

Many things Nokomis taught him

65

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75

85

Of the stars that shine in heaven;  
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,  
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses;  
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,      90  
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs  
Flaring far away to northward  
In the frosty nights of Winter;  
Showed the broad white road in heaven,  
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,      95  
Running straight across the heavens,  
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows.

At the door on summer evenings  
Sat the little Hiawatha;  
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,      100  
Heard the lapping of the waters,  
Sounds of music, words of wonder;  
“Minne-wawa!” said the pine-trees.  
“Mudway-aushka!” said the water.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,      105  
Flitting through the dusk of evening,  
With the twinkle of its candle  
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,  
And he sang the song of children,  
Sang the song Nokomis taught him:      110  
“Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,

Little, flitting, white-fire insect,  
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,  
Light me with your little candle,  
Ere upon my bed I lay me,  
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

115

Saw the moon rise from the water  
Rippling, rounding from the water,  
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,  
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?" 120  
And the good Nokomis answered:  
"Once a warrior, very angry,  
Seized his grandmother, and threw her  
Up into the sky at midnight;  
Right against the moon he threw her; 125  
'T is her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,  
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,  
Whispered, "What is that, Nokomis?"  
And the good Nokomis answered: 130  
" 'T is the heaven of flowers you see there;  
All the wild-flowers of the forest,  
All the lilies of the prairie,  
When on earth they fade and perish,  
Blossom in that heaven above us." 135

When he heard the owls at midnight,

Hooting, laughing in the forest,  
"What is that?" he cried in terror;  
"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"  
And the good Nokomis answered:      140  
"That is but the owl and owlet,  
Talking in their native language,  
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha  
Learned of every bird its language,      145  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How they built their nests in Summer,  
Where they hid themselves in Winter,  
Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."      150

Of all beasts he learned the language,  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How the beavers built their lodges,  
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,  
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,      155  
Why the rabbit was so timid,  
Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,  
He the marvellous story-teller,      160  
He the traveller and the talker,

He the friend of old Nokomis,  
Made a bow for Hiawatha;  
From a branch of ash he made it,  
From an oak-bough made the arrows, 165  
Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers,  
And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha:  
"Go, my son, into the forest,  
Where the red deer herd together, 170  
Kill for us a famous roebuck,  
Kill for us a deer with antlers!"

Forth into the forest straightway  
All alone walked Hiawatha  
Proudly, with his bow and arrows; 175  
And the birds sang round him, o'er him,  
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!"  
Sang the Opechee, the robin,  
Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
"Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!" 180

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,  
Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
In and out among the branches,  
Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,  
Laughed, and said between his laughing, 185  
"Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

And the rabbit from his pathway  
Leaped aside, and at a distance  
Sat erect upon his haunches,  
Half in fear and half in frolic,  
Saying to the little hunter,  
"Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

190

But he heeded not, nor heard them,  
For his thoughts were with the red deer;  
On their tracks his eyes were fastened,   195  
Leading downward to the river,  
To the ford across the river,  
And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder-bushes,  
There he waited till the deer came,   200  
Till he saw two antlers lifted,  
Saw two eyes look from the thicket,  
Saw two nostrils point to windward,  
And a deer came down the pathway,  
Flecked with leafy light and shadow.   205  
And his heart within him fluttered,  
Trembled like the leaves above him,  
Like the birch-leaf palpitated,  
**As the deer came down the pathway.**

205

Then, upon one knee uprising,   210  
**Hiawatha aimed an arrow;**

Scarce a twig moved with his motion,  
 Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled,  
 But the wary roebuck started,  
 Stamped with all his hoofs together,  
 Listened with one foot uplifted,  
 Leaped as if to meet the arrow;  
 Ah! the singing, fatal arrow;  
 Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him!

215

Dead he lay there in the forest,  
 By the ford across the river;  
 Beat his timid heart no longer,  
 But the heart of Hiawatha  
 Throbbed and shouted and exulted,  
 As he bore the red deer homeward,  
 And Iagoo and Nokomis  
 Hailed his coming with applauses.

220

From the red deer's hide Nokomis  
 Made a cloak for Hiawatha,  
 From the red deer's flesh Nokomis  
 Made a banquet in his honor.  
 All the village came and feasted,  
 All the guests praised Hiawatha,  
 Called him Strong-Heart, Soan-ge-taha!  
 Called him Loon-Heart, Mahn-go-taysee!

225

230



"I have given you lands to hunt in."

#### IV.

#### HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS.



UT of childhood into  
manhood  
Now had grown my  
Hiawatha,  
Skilled in all the craft  
of hunters,

Learned in all the lore of old men,  
In all youthful sports and pastimes,  
In all manly arts and labors.

Swift of foot was Hiawatha;  
He could shoot an arrow from him,  
And run forward with such fleetness,  
That the arrow fell behind him! 5  
10

**46** THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Strong of arm was Hiawatha;  
He could shoot ten arrows upward,  
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness,  
That the tenth had left the bow-string  
Ere the first to earth had fallen! **15**

He had mittens, Minjekahwun,  
Magic mittens made of deer-skin;  
When upon his hands he wore them,  
He could smite the rocks asunder,  
He could grind them into powder. **20**

He had moccasins enchanted,  
Magic moccasins of deer-skin;  
When he bound them round his ankles,  
When upon his feet he tied them,  
At each stride a mile he measured! **25**

Much he questioned old Nokomis  
Of his father Mudjekeewis;  
Learned from her the fatal secret  
Of the beauty of his mother,  
Of the falsehood of his father; **30**

And his heart was hot within him,  
Like a living coal his heart was.

Then he said to old Nokomis,  
“I will go to Mudjekeewis,  
See how fares it with my father, **35**

At the doorways of the West-Wind,  
At the portals of the Sunset!"

From his lodge went Hiawatha,  
Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;  
Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings,      40  
Richly wrought with quills and wampum  
On his head his eagle-feathers,  
Round his waist his belt of wampum,  
In his hand his bow of ash-wood,  
Strung with sinews of the reindeer;      45  
In his quiver oaken arrows,  
Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;  
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
With his moccasins enchanted.

Warning said the old Nokomis,      50  
"Go not forth, O Hiawatha!  
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,  
To the realms of Mudjekeewis,  
Lest he harm you with his magic,  
Lest he kill you with his cunning!"      55

But the fearless Hiawatha  
Heeded not her woman's warning;  
Forth he strode into the forest,  
At each stride a mile he measured;  
Lurid seemed the sky above him,      60

Lurid seemed the earth beneath him,  
Hot and close the air around him,  
Filled with smoke and fiery vapors,  
As of burning woods and prairies.  
For his heart was hot within him,  
Like a living coal his heart was.

65

So he journeyed westward, westward,  
Left the fleetest deer behind him,  
Left the antelope and bison;  
Crossed the rushing Esconaba,  
Crossed the mighty Mississippi,  
Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,  
Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,  
Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,  
Came unto the Rocky Mountains,  
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,  
Where upon the gusty summits  
Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis,  
Ruler of the winds of heaven.

70

75

Filled with awe was Hiawatha  
At the aspect of his father.  
On the air about him wildly  
Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses,  
Gleamed like drifting snow his tresses.  
Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet,

80

85

Like the star with fiery tresses.

Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis  
When he looked on Hiawatha,  
Saw his youth rise up before him  
In the face of Hiawatha,  
Saw the beauty of Wenonah  
From the grave rise up before him.

90

"Welcome!" said he, "Hiawatha,  
To the kingdom of the West-Wind!  
Long have I been waiting for you!  
Youth is lovely, age is long 'y,  
Youth is fiery, age is frosty;  
You bring back the days departed,  
You bring back my youth of passion,  
And the beautiful Wenonah!"

95

100

Many days they talked together,  
Questioned, listened, waited, answered;  
Much the mighty Mudjekeewis  
Boasted of his ancient prowess,  
Of his perilous adventures,  
His indomitable courage,  
His invulnerable body.

105

Patiently sat Hiawatha,  
Listening to his father's boasting;  
With a smile he sat and listened,

110

50 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA

Uttered neither threat nor menace,  
Neither word nor look betrayed him,  
But his heart was hot within him,  
Like a living coal his heart was.

Then he said, "O Mudjekeewis,  
Is there nothing that can harm you?  
Nothing that you are afraid of?"  
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,  
Grand and gracious in his boasting,  
Answered, saying, "There is nothing  
Nothing but the black rock yonder,  
Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!"

And he looked at Hiawatha  
With a wise look and benignant,  
With a countenance paternal,  
Looked with pride upon the beauty  
Of his tall and graceful figure,  
Saying, "O my Hiawatha!  
Is there anything can harm you?  
Anything you are afraid of?"

But the wary Hiawatha  
Paused awhile, as if uncertain,  
Held his peace, as if resolving,  
And then answered, "There is nothing.  
Nothing but the bulrush yonder,

115

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125

130

135

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

51

**N**othing but the great Apukwá!"

And as Mudjekeewis, rising,  
Stretched his hand to pluck the bulrush,  
Hiawatha cried in terror,  
Cried in well-dissembled terror,  
"Kago! kago! do not touch it!"  
"Ah, kaween!" said Mudjekeewis,  
"No indeed, I will not touch it!"

Then they talked of other matters;

First of Hiawatha's brothers,  
First of Wabun, of the East-Wind,  
Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee,  
Of the North, Kabibonokka;  
Then of Hiawatha's mother,  
Of the beautiful Wenonah,  
Of her birth upon the meadow,  
Of her death, as old Nokomis  
Had remembered and related.

And he cried, "O Mudjekeewis,  
It was you who killed Wenonah,  
Took her young life and her beauty,  
Broke the Lily of the Prairie,  
Trampled it beneath your footsteps;  
You confess it! you confess it!"  
And the mighty Mudjekeewis

140

145

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155

160

Tossed his gray hairs to the West-Wind,  
Bowed his hoary head in anguish,  
With a silent nod assented.



"He was dressed in deer-skin leggings,  
Fringed with hedge-hog quills and ermine."

Then up started Hiawatha,  
And with threatening look and gesture      165  
Laid his hand upon the black rock,

On the fatal Wawbeek laid it,  
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
Rent the jutting crag asunder,  
Smote and crushed it into fragments,      170  
Hurled them madly at his father,  
The remorseful Mudjekeewis,  
For his heart was hot within him,  
Like a living coal his heart was.

But the ruler of the West-Wind      175  
Blew the fragments backward from him,  
With the breathing of his nostrils,  
With the tempest of his anger,  
Blew them back at his assailant;  
Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa,      180  
Dragged it with its roots and fibres  
From the margin of the meadow,  
From its ooze, the giant bulrush;  
Long and loud laughed Hiawatha!

Then began the deadly conflict,      185  
Hand to hand among the mountains;  
From his eyry screamed the eagle,  
The Keneu, the great war-eagle,  
Sat upon the crags around them,  
Wheeling flapped his wings above them. 190

Like a tall tree in the tempest

Bent and lashed the giant bulrush;  
And in masses huge and heavy  
Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek;  
Till the earth shook with the tumult  
And confusion of the battle,  
And the air was full of shoutings,  
And the thunder of the mountains,  
Starting, answered, "Baim-wawa!"

195

Back retreated Mudjekeewis,  
Rushing westward o'er the mountains,  
Stumbling westward down the mountains,  
Three whole days retreated fighting,  
Still pursued by Hiawatha  
To the doorways of the West-Wind,  
To the portals of the Sunset,  
To the earth's remotest border,  
Where into the empty spaces  
Sinks the sun, as a flamingo  
Drops into her nest at nightfall,  
In the melancholy marshes.

200

205

210

"Hold!" at length cried Mudjekeewis,  
"Hold, my son, my Hiawatha!  
'T is impossible to kill me,  
For you cannot kill the immortal.  
I have put you to this trial,

215

But to know and prove your courage;  
Now receive the prize of valor!

“Go back to your home and people,  
Live among them, toil among them,      220  
Cleanse the earth from all that harms it,  
Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers,  
Slay all monsters and magicians,  
All the giants, the Wendigoes,  
All the serpents, the Kenaheeks,      225  
As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa,  
Slew the Great Bear of the mountains.

“And at last when Death draws near you,  
When the awful eyes of Pauguk  
Glare upon you in the darkness,      230  
I will share my kingdom with you,  
Ruler shall you be thenceforward  
Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin,  
Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin.”

Thus was fought that famous battle      235  
In the dreadful days of Shah-shah,  
In the days long since departed,  
In the kingdom of the West-Wind.  
Still the hunter sees its traces  
Scattered far o'er hill and valley;      240  
Sees the giant bulrush growing

By the ponds and water-courses,  
Sees the masses of the Wawbeek  
Lying still in every valley.

Homeward now went Hiawatha;      249  
Pleasant was the landscape round him,  
Pleasant was the air above him,  
For the bitterness of anger  
Had departed wholly from him,  
From his brain the thought of vengeance, 250  
From his heart the burning fever.

Only once his pace he slackened,  
Only once he paused or halted,  
Paused to purchase heads of arrows  
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,      255  
In the land of the Dacotahs,  
Where the Fal's of Minnehaha  
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,  
Laugh and leap into the valley.

There the ancient Arrow-maker      260  
Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,  
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,  
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,  
Hard and polished, keen and costly.      265  
With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter,

Wayward as the Minnehaha,  
With her moods of shade and sunshine,  
Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,  
Feet as rapid as the river,  
Tresses flowing like the water,  
And as musical a laughter;  
And he named her from the river,  
From the water-fall he named her,  
Minnehaha, Laughing Water.

270

275

Was it then for heads of arrows,  
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,  
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
That my Hiawatha halted  
In the land of the Dacotahs?

280

Was it not to see the maiden,  
See the face of Laughing Water  
Peeping from behind the curtain,  
Hear the rustling of her garments  
From behind the waving curtain,  
As one sees the Minnehaha  
Gleaming, glancing through the branches,  
As one hears the Laughing Water  
From behind its screen of branches?

285

Who shall say what thoughts and visions  
Fill the fiery brains of young men?

290

Who shall say what dreams of beauty  
Filled the heart of Hiawatha?  
All he told to old Nokomis,  
When he reached the lodge at sunset,  
Was the meeting with his father,  
Was his fight with Mudjekeewis;  
Not a word he said of arrows,  
Not a word of Laughing Water!

295



*Blanket Woven by Navajo Woman.*



## V.

### HIAWATHA'S FASTING.

OU shall hear how Hia-  
watha  
Prayed and fasted in the  
forest,  
Not for greater skill in hunt-  
ing,

Not for greater craft in fishing,  
Not for triumphs in the battle,  
And renown among the warriors,  
But for profit of the people,  
For advantage of the nations.

First he built a lodge for fasting,

Built a wigwam in the forest,  
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,  
In the blithe and pleasant Spring-time,  
In the Moon of Leaves he built it,  
And, with dreams and visions many,  
Seven whole days and nights he fasted.

10

On the first day of his fasting  
Through the leafy woods he wandered;  
Saw the deer start from the thicket,  
Saw the rabbit in his burrow,  
Heard the pheasant, Bena, drumming,  
Heard the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
Rattling in his hoard of acorns,  
Saw the pigeon, the Omeme,  
Building nests among the pine-trees,  
And in flocks the wild goose, Wawa,  
Flying to the fen-lands northward,  
Whirring, wailing far above him.  
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding,  
"Must our lives depend on these things?"

20

25

On the next day of his fasting  
By the river's brink he wandered,  
Through the Muskoday, the meadow,  
Saw the wild rice, Mahnomonee,  
Saw the blueberry, Meenahga,

30

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

61

And the strawberry, Odahmin,   35  
And the gooseberry, Shahbomin,  
And the grape-vine, the Bemahgut,  
Trailing o'er the alder-branches,  
Filling all the air with fragrance!  
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding,                                   40  
'Must our lives depend on these things?"

On the third day of his fasting  
By the lake he sat and pondered,  
By the still, transparent water;  
Saw the sturgeon, Nahma, leaping,   45  
Scattering drops like beads of wampum,  
Saw the yellow perch, the Sahwa,  
Like a sunbeam in the water,  
Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,  
And the herring, Okahahwis,   50  
And the Shawgashee, the craw-fish!  
"Master of Life!" he cried, desponding,  
"Must our lives depend on these things?"

On the fourth day of his fasting  
In his lodge he lay exhausted;   55  
From his couch of leaves and branches  
Gazing with half-open eyelids,  
Full of shadowy dreams and visions,  
On the dizzy, swimming landscape,

**62** THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

On the gleaming of the water, 60  
On the splendor of the sunset.

And he saw a youth approaching,  
Dressed in garments green and yellow,  
Coming through the purple twilight,  
Through the splendor of the sunset; 65  
Plumes of green bent o'er his forehead,  
And his hair was soft and golden.

Standing at the open doorway,  
Long he looked at Hiawatha,  
Looked with pity and compassion 70  
On his wasted form and features,  
And, in accents like the sighing  
Of the South-Wind in the tree-tops,  
Said he, "O my Hiawatha!  
All your prayers are heard in heaven, 75  
For you pray not like the others;  
Not for greater skill in hunting,  
Not for greater craft in fishing,  
Not for triumph in the battle,  
Nor renown among the warriors,  
But for profit of the people, 80  
For advantage of the nations.

"From the Master of Life descending,  
**I**, the friend of man, Mondamin,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

63

Come to warn you and instruct you,                            85  
How by struggle and by labor  
You shall gain what you have prayed for.  
Rise up from your bed of branches,  
Rise, O youth, and wrestle with me!"

Faint with famine, Hiawatha                            90  
Started from his bed of branches,  
From the twilight of his wigwam  
Forth into the flush of sunset  
Came, and wrestled with Mondamin;  
At his touch he felt new courage                            95  
Throbbing in his brain and bosom,  
Felt new life and hope and vigor  
Run through every nerve and fibre.

So they wrestled there together  
In the glory of the sunset,                            100  
And the more they strove and struggled,  
Stronger still grew Hiawatha;  
Till the darkness fell around them,  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
From her haunts among the fen-lands,                    105  
Gave a cry of lamentation,  
Gave a scream of pain and famine.

"'T is enough!" then said Mondamin,  
Smiling upon Hiawatha.

"But to-morrow, when the sun sets,      114  
I will come again to try you."

And he vanished, and was seen not;  
Whether sinking as the rain sinks,  
Whether rising as the mists rise,  
Hiawatha saw not, knew not,      115  
Only saw that he had vanished,  
Leaving him alone and fainting,  
With the misty lake below him,  
And the reeling stars above him.

On the morrow and the next day,      120  
When the sun through heaven descending,  
Like a red and burning cinder  
From the hearth of the Great Spirit,  
Fell into the western waters,  
Came Mondamin for the trial,      125  
For the strife with Hiawatha;  
Came as silent as the dew comes,  
From the empty air appearing,  
Into empty air returning,  
Taking shape when earth it touches      130  
But invisible to all men  
In its coming and its going.

Thrice they wrestled there together  
In the glory of the sunset,

Till the darkness fell around them,                    135  
Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
From her haunts among the fen-lands,  
Uttered her loud cry of famine,  
And Mondamin paused to listen.

Tall and beautiful he stood there,                    140  
In his garments green and yellow;  
To and fro his plumes above him  
Waved and nodded with his breathing,  
And the sweat of the encounter  
Stood like drops of dew upon him.                    145

And he cried, "O Hiawatha!  
Bravely have you wrestled with me,  
Thrice have wrestled stoutly with me,  
And the Master of Life, who sees us,  
He will give to you the triumph!"                    150

Then he smiled and said: "To-morrow  
Is the last day of your conflict,  
Is the last day of your fasting.  
You will conquer and o'ercome me;  
Make a bed for me to lie in,                        155  
Where the rain may fall upon me,  
Where the sun may come and warm me;  
Strip these garments, green and yellow,  
Strip this nodding plumage from me, .

66 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Lay me in the earth and make it                    160  
Soft and loose and light above me.

“Let no hand disturb my slumber,  
Let no weed nor worm molest me,  
Let not Kahgahgee, the raven,  
Come to haunt me and molest me,                    165  
Only come yourself to watch me,  
Till I wake, and start, and quicken,  
Till I leap into the sunshine.”

And thus saying, he departed;  
Peacefully slept Hiawatha,                    170  
But he heard the Wawonaissa,  
Heard the whippoorwill complaining,  
Perched upon his lonely wigwam;  
Heard the rushing Sebowisha,  
Heard the rivulet rippling near him,                    175  
Talking to the darksome forest;  
Heard the sighing of the branches,  
As they lifted and subsided  
At the passing of the night-wind,  
Heard them, as one hears in slumber                    180  
Far-off murmurs, dreamy whispers:  
Peacefully slept Hiawatha.

On the morrow came Nokomis,  
On the seventh day of his fasting,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

67

Came with food for Hiawatha,  
Came imploring and bewailing,  
Lest his hunger should o'ercome him,  
Lest his fasting should be fatal.

185

But he tasted not, and touched not,  
Only said to her, "Nokomis,  
Wait until the sun is setting,  
Till the darkness falls around us,  
Till the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Crying from the desolate marshes,  
Tells us that the day is ended."

190

195

Homeward weeping went Nokomis,  
Sorrowing for her Hiawatha,  
Fearing lest his strength should fail him,  
Lest his fasting should be fatal.

He meanwhile sat weary waiting  
For the coming of Mondamin,  
Till the shadows, pointing eastward,  
Lengthened over field and forest,  
Till the sun dropped from the heaven,  
Floating on the waters westward,  
As a red leaf in the Autumn  
Falls and floats upon the water,  
Falls and sinks into its bosom.

200

205

And behold! the young Mondamin,

With his soft and shining tresses,  
With his garments green and yellow,  
With his long and glossy plumage,  
Stood and beckoned at the doorway.  
And as one in slumber walking,  
Pale and haggard, but undaunted,  
From the wigwam Hiawatha  
Came and wrestled with Mondamin.

210

Round about him spun the landscape,  
Sky and forest reeled together,  
And his strong heart leaped within him, 220  
As the sturgeon leaps and struggles  
In a net to break its meshes.  
Like a ring of fire around him  
Blazed and flared the red horizon,  
And a hundred suns seemed looking  
At the combat of the wrestlers.

215

Suddenly upon the greensward  
All alone stood Hiawatha,  
Panting with his wild exertion,  
Palpitating with the struggle; 230  
And before him, breathless, lifeless,  
Lay the youth, with hair dishevelled,  
Plumage torn, and garments tattered,  
Dead he lay there in the sunset.

225

230

And victorious Hiawatha

235

Made the grave as he commanded,  
Stripped the garments from Mondamin,  
Stripped his tattered plumage from him,  
Laid him in the earth, and made it  
Soft and loose and light above him;  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
From the melancholy moorlands,  
Gave a cry of lamentation,  
Gave a cry of pain and anguish!

240

Homeward then went Hiawatha

245

To the lodge of old Nokomis,  
And the seven days of his fasting  
Were accomplished and completed.  
But the place was not forgotten  
Where he wrestled with Mondamin;  
Nor forgotten nor neglected  
Was the grave where lay Mondamin,  
Sleeping in the rain and sunshine,  
Where his scattered plumes and garments  
Faded in the rain and sunshine.

250

255

Day by day did Hiawatha  
Go to wait and watch beside it;  
Kept the dark mould soft above it,  
Kept it clean from weeds and insects,

Drove away, with scoffs and shoutings,      260  
Kahgahgee, the king of ravens.

Till at length a small green feather  
From the earth shot slowly upward,  
Then another and another,  
And before the Summer ended      265  
Stood the maize in all its beauty,  
With its shining robes about it,  
And its long, soft, yellow tresses;  
And in rapture Hiawatha  
Cried aloud, "It is Mondamin!      270  
Yes, the friend of man, Mondamin!"  
Then he called to old Nokomis  
And Iagoo, the great boaster,  
Showed them where the maize was growing,  
Told them of his wondrous vision,      275  
Of his wrestling and his triumph,  
Of this new gift to the nations,  
Which should be their food forever.

And still later, when the Autumn  
Changed the long, green leaves to yellow, 280  
And the soft and juicy kernels  
Grew like wampum hard and yellow,  
Then the ripened ears he gathered,  
Stripped the withered husks from off them,

As he once had stripped the wrestler,  
Gave the first Feast of Mondamin,  
And made known unto the people  
This new gift of the Great Spirit.

285



"Danced the beggar's dance to please them."



"In the hoof-prints of the Bison."

## VI.

### HIAWATHA'S FRIENDS.



WO good friends had  
Hiawatha,  
Singled out from all the  
others,  
Bound to him in closest  
union,

And to whom he gave the right hand  
Of his heart, in joy and sorrow;  
Chibiabos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwasind.

5

Straight between them ran the pathway,  
Never grew the grass upon it;  
Singing birds, that utter falsehoods,  
Story-tellers, mischief-makers.

10

Found no eager ear to listen,  
Could not breed ill-will between them,  
For they kept each other's counsel,  
Spake with naked hearts together,  
Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.

15

Most beloved by Hiawatha  
Was the gentle Chibiabos,  
He the best of all musicians,  
He the sweetest of all singers.  
Beautiful and childlike was he,  
Brave as man is, soft as woman,  
Pliant as a wand of willow,  
Stately as a deer with antlers.

20

When he sang, the village listened;  
All the warriors gathered round him,  
All the women came to hear him;  
Now he stirred their souls to passion,  
Now he melted them to pity.

25

From the hollow reeds he fashioned  
Flutes so musical and mellow,  
That the brook, the Sebowisha,  
Ceased to murmur in the woodland,  
That the wood-birds ceased from singing. 30  
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,

35

Ceased his chatter in the oak-tree,  
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,  
Sat upright to look and listen.

Yes, the brook, the Sebowisha,  
Pausing, said, "O Chibiabos,  
Teach my waves to flow in music,  
Softly as your words in singing!"

Yes, the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
Envious, said, "O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as wild and wayward,  
Teach me songs as full of frenzy!"

Yes, the Opechee, the robin,  
Joyous, said, "O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as sweet and tender,  
Teach me songs as full of gladness!"

And the whippoorwill, Wawonaissa,  
Sobbing, said, "O Chibiabos,  
Teach me tones as melancholy,  
Teach me songs as full of sadness!"

All the many sounds of nature  
Borrowed sweetness from his singing;  
All the hearts of men were softened  
By the pathos of his music;  
For he sang of peace and freedom,  
Sang of beauty, love, and longing;

44

45

50

55

60

Sang of death, and life undying  
 In the Islands of the Blessed,  
 In the kingdom of Ponemah,  
 In the land of the Hereafter.

65

Very dear to Hiawatha  
 Was the gentle Chibiabos,  
 He the best of all musicians,  
 He the sweetest of all singers;  
 For his gentleness he loved him,  
 And the magic of his singing.

70



Dear, too, unto Hiawatha  
 Was the very strong man, Kwasind,  
 He the strongest of all mortals,  
 He the mightiest among many;  
 For his very strength he loved him,  
 For his strength allied to goodness.

75

Idle in his youth was Kwasind,  
 Very listless, dull, and dreamy,  
 Never played with other children,  
 Never fished and never hunted,  
 Not like other children was he;  
 But they saw that much he fasted,  
 Much his Manito entreated,

80

Much besought his Guardian Spirit.

85

"Lazy Kwasind!" said his mother,  
"In my work you never help me!  
In the Summer you are roaming  
Idly in the fields and forests;  
In the Winter you are cowering  
O'er the firebrands in the wigwam!  
In the coldest days of Winter  
I must break the ice for fishing;  
With my nets you never help me!  
At the door my nets are hanging,  
Dripping, freezing with the water;  
Go and wring them, Yenadizze!  
Go and dry them in the sunshine!"

90

Slowly, from the ashes, Kwasind  
Rose, but made no angry answer;  
From the lodge went forth in silence,  
Took the nets, that hung together,  
Dripping, freezing at the doorway;  
Like a wisp of straw he wrung them,  
Like a wisp of straw he broke them,  
Could not wring them without breaking,  
Such the strength was in his fingers.

95

"Lazy Kwasind!" said his father,  
"In the hunt you never help me;

100

105

Every bow you touch is broken,  
Snapped asunder every arrow;  
Yet come with me to the forest,  
You shall bring the hunting homeward."

Down a narrow pass they wandered,  
Where a brooklet led them onward,  
Where the trail of deer and bison  
Marked the soft mud on the margin,  
Till they found all further passage  
Shut against them, barred securely  
By the trunks of trees uprooted,  
Lying lengthwise, lying crosswise,  
And forbidding further passage.

"We must go back," said the old man,  
"O'er these logs we cannot clamber;  
Not a woodchuck could get through them, 125  
Not a squirrel clamber o'er them!"  
And straightway his pipe he lighted,  
And sat down to smoke and ponder.  
But before his pipe was finished,  
Lo! the path was cleared before him: 130  
All the trunks had Kwasind lifted,  
To the right hand, to the left hand,  
Shot the pine-trees swift as arrows,  
Hurled the cedars light as lances.

78 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

"Lazy Kwasind!" said the young man, 135  
As they sported in the meadow;  
"Why standing idly looking at us,  
Leaning on the rock behind you?  
Come and wrestle with the others,  
Let us pitch the quoit together!" 140

Lazy Kwasind made no answer,  
To their challenge made no answer,  
Only rose, and, slowly turning,  
Seized the huge rock in his fingers,  
Tore it from its deep foundation, 145  
Poised it in the air a moment,  
Pitched it sheer into the river,  
Sheer into the swift Pauwating,  
Where it still is seen in Summer.

Once as down that foaming river, 150  
Down the rapids of Pauwating,  
Kwasind sailed with his companions,  
In the stream he saw a beaver,  
Saw Ahmeek, the King of Beavers,  
Struggling with the rushing currents, 155  
Rising, sinking in the water.

Without speaking, without pausing,  
Kwasind leaped into the river,  
Plunged beneath the bubbling surface,

Through the whirlpools chased the beaver,  
160

Followed him among the islands,  
Stayed so long beneath the water,  
That his terrified companions  
Cried, "Alas! good-by to Kwasind!  
We shall never more see Kwasind!"  
165  
But he reappeared triumphant,  
And upon his shining shoulders  
Brought the beaver, dead and dripping,  
Brought the King of all the Beavers.

And these two, as I have told you,  
170  
Were the friends of Hiawatha,  
Chibabos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwasind.  
Long they lived in peace together,  
Spake with naked hearts together,  
175  
Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.



*Beads of Wampum, Shells and Turquoise.*



## VII.

### HIAWATHA'S SAILING.

IVE me of your bark,  
O Birch-Tree  
Of your yellow Lark,  
O Birch-Tree!

Growing by the rushing river,  
Tall and stately in the valley!  
I a light canoe will build me,  
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,  
That shall float upon the river,  
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,

5

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

87

Like a yellow water-lily!

“Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree!      10  
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,  
For the summer-time is coming,  
And the sun is warm in heaven,  
And you need no white-skin wrapper!”

Thus aloud cried Hiawatha      15  
In the solitary forest,  
By the rushing Taquamenaw,  
When the birds were singing gayly,  
In the Moon of Leaves were singing,  
And the sun, from sleep awaking,  
Started up and said, “Behold me!  
Gheezis, the great Sun, behold me!”

And the tree with all its branches  
Rustled in the breeze of morning,  
Saying, with a sigh of patience,  
“Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!”      25

With his knife the tree he girdled;  
Just beneath its lowest branches,  
Just above the roots, he cut it,  
Till the sap came oozing outward;      30  
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,  
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,  
With a wooden wedge he raised it,

Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

"Give me of your boughs, O Cedar! 35  
Of your strong and pliant branches,  
My canoe to make more steady,  
Make more strong and firm beneath me!"

Through the summit of the Cedar  
Went a sound, a cry of horror, 40  
Went a murmur of resistance;  
But it whispered, bending downward,  
"Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!"

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,  
Shaped them straightway to a framework, 45  
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,  
Like two bended bows together.

"Give me of your roots, O Tamarack!  
Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree!  
My canoe to bind together, 50  
So to bind the ends together  
That the water may not enter,  
That the river may not wet me!"

And the Larch, with all its fibres,  
Shivered in the air of morning,  
Touched his forehead with its tassels,  
Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,  
"Take them all, O Hiawatha!" 55

From the earth he tore the fibres,  
Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree,  
Closely sewed the bark together,  
Bound it closely to the framework.

“Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree!  
Of your balsam and your resin,  
So to close the seams together  
That the water may not enter,  
That the river may not wet me!”

And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre,  
Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,  
Rattled like a shore with pebbles,  
Answered wailing, answered weeping,  
“Take my balm, O Hiawatha!”

And he took the tears of balsam,  
Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,  
Smeared therewith each seam and fissure,  
Made each crevice safe from water.

“Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog!  
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog!  
I will make a necklace of them,  
Make a girdle for my beauty,  
And two stars to deck her bosom!”

From a hollow tree the Hedgehog  
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,

Shot his shining quills, like arrows,  
Saying, with a drowsy murmur,  
Through the tangle of his whiskers,  
"Take my quills, O Hiawatha!"

85

From the ground the quills he gathered,  
All the little shining arrows,  
Stained them red and blue and yellow,  
With the juice of roots and berries;  
Into his canoe he wrought them,  
Round its waist a shining girdle,  
Round its bows a gleaming necklace,  
On its breast two stars resplendent.

90

95



Thus the Birch Canoe was builded  
In the valley, by the river,  
In the bosom of the forest;  
And the forest's life was in it,  
All its mystery and its magic,  
All the lightness of the birch-tree,  
All the toughness of the cedar,  
All the larch's supple sinews;  
And it floated on the river,  
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,  
Like a yellow water-lily.

100

105

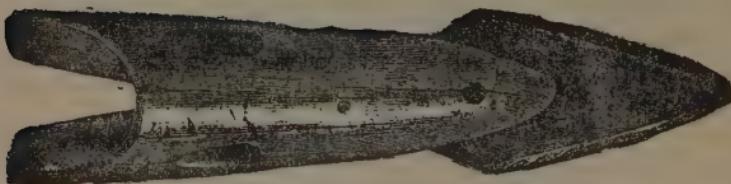
Paddles none had Hiawatha,  
Paddles none he had or needed,  
For his thoughts as paddles served him,  
And his wishes served to guide him;      110  
Swift or slow at will he glided,  
Veered to right or left at pleasure.

Then he called aloud to Kwasind,  
To his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,  
Saying, "Help me clear this river      115  
Of its sunken logs and sand-bars."

Straight into the river Kwasind  
Plunged as if he were an otter,  
Dived as if he were a beaver,  
Stood up to his waist in water,      120  
To his arm-pits in the river,  
Swam and shouted in the river,  
Tugged at sunken logs and branches,  
With his hands he scooped the sand-bars,  
With his feet the ooze and tangle.      125

And thus sailed my Hiawatha  
Down the rushing Taquamenaw,  
Sailed through all its bends and windings,  
Sailed through all its deeps and shallows,  
While his friend, the strong man, Kwa-  
sind,      130

Swam the deeps, the shallows waded.  
Up and down the river went they,  
In and out among its islands,  
Cleared its bed of root and sand-bar,  
Dragged the dead trees from its channel, 135  
Made its passage safe and certain,  
Made a pathway for the people,  
From its springs among the mountains,  
To the waters of Pauwating,  
To the bay of Taquamenaw. 140



*Wood Head of Ojibway Fish-Spear.*



*Shell and Pearl Beads of the Iroquois.*

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### VIII.

#### HIAWATHA'S FISHING.

ORTH upon the Git-  
che Gumee,  
On the shining Big-  
Sea-Water,  
With his fishing-line  
of cedar,

Of the twisted bark of cedar,  
Forth to catch the sturgeon Nahma,

5

Mishe-Nahma, King of Fishes,  
In his birch canoe exulting  
All alone went Hiawatha.

Through the clear, transparent water  
He could see the fishes swimming      10  
Far down in the depths below him;  
See the yellow perch, the Sahwa,  
Like a sunbeam in the water,  
See the Shawgashee, the craw-fish,  
Like a spider on the bottom,      15  
On the white and sandy bottom.

At the stern sat Hiawatha,  
With his fishing-line of cedar;  
In his plumes the breeze of morning  
Played as in the hemlock branches;      20  
On the bows, with tail erected,  
Sat the squirrel, Adjidaumo;  
In his fur the breeze of morning  
Played as in the prairie grasses.

On the white sand of the bottom  
Lay the monster Mishe-Nahma,  
Lay the sturgeon, King of Fishes;  
Through his gills he breathed the water,  
With his fins he fanned and winnowed,  
With his tail he swept the sand-floor.      25  
30

There he lay in all his armor;  
On each side a shield to guard him,  
Plates of bone upon his forehead,  
Down his sides and back and shoulders  
Plates of bone with spines projecting,  
Painted was he with his war-paints,  
Stripes of yellow, red, and azure,  
Spots of brown and spots of sable;  
And he lay there on the bottom,  
Fanning with his fins of purple,  
As above him Hiawatha  
In his birch canoe came sailing,  
With his fishing-line of cedar.

35

40

"Take my bait!" cried Hiawatha,  
Down into the depths beneath him,  
"Take my bait, O Sturgeon, Nahma!  
Come up from below the water,  
Let us see which is the stronger!"  
And he dropped his line of cedar  
Through the clear, transparent water,  
Waited vainly for an answer,  
Long sat waiting for an answer,  
And repeating loud and louder,  
"Take my bait, O King of Fishes!"  
Quiet lay the sturgeon, Nahma,

45

50

55

Fanning slowly in the water,  
Looking up at Hiawatha,  
Listening to his call and clamor,  
His unnecessary tumult,  
Till he wearied of the shouting;  
And he said to the Kenozha,  
To the pike, the Maskenozha,  
“Take the bait of this rude fellow,  
Break the line of Hiawatha!”

60

In his fingers Hiawatha  
Felt the loose line jerk and tighten;  
As he drew it in, it tugged so,  
That the birch canoe stood endwise,  
Like a birch log in the water,  
With the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
Perched and frisking on the summit.

65

Full of scorn was Hiawatha  
When he saw the fish rise upward,  
Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,  
Coming nearer, nearer to him,  
And he shouted through the water,  
“Esa! esa! shame upon you!  
You are but the pike, Kenozha,  
You are not the fish I wanted,  
You are not the King of Fishes!”

70

75

80

Reeling downward to the bottom  
Sank the pike in great confusion,  
And the mighty sturgeon, Nahma,  
Said to Ugudwash, the sun-fish,  
"Take the bait of this great boaster,      85  
Break the line of Hiawatha!"

Slowly upward, wavering, gleaming,  
Like a white moon in the water;  
Rose the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,  
Seized the line of Hiawatha,      90  
Swung with all his weight upon it,  
Made a whirlpool in the water,  
Whirled the birch canoe in circles,  
Round and round in gurgling eddies,  
Till the circles in the water      95  
Reached the far-off sandy beaches,  
Till the water-flags and rushes  
Nodded on the distant margins.

But when Hiawatha saw him  
Slowly rising through the water,      100  
Lifting his great disc of whiteness,  
Loud he shouted in derision,  
"Esa! esa! shame upon you!  
You are Ugudwash, the sun-fish,  
You are not the fish I wanted,      105

You are not the King of Fishes!"

Wavering downward, white and ghastly,  
 Sank the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,  
 And again the sturgeon, Nahma,  
 Heard the shout of Hiawatha,  
 Heard his challenge of defiance,  
 The unnecessary tumult,  
 Ringing far across the water.

From the white sand of the bottom  
 Up he rose with angry gesture,  
 Quivering in each nerve and fibre,  
 Clashing all his plates of armor,  
 Gleaming bright with all his war-paint;  
 In his wrath he darted upward,  
 Flashing leaped into the sunshine,  
 Opened his great jaws, and swallowed  
 Both canoe and Hiawatha.

Down into that darksome cavern  
 Plunged the headlong Hiawatha,  
 As a log on some black river  
 Shoots and plunges down the rapids,  
 Found himself in utter darkness,  
 Groped around in helpless wonder,  
 Till he felt a great heart beating,  
 Throbbing in that utter darkness.

110

115

120

125

130

And he smote it in his anger,  
With his fist, the heart of Nahma,  
Felt the mighty King of Fishes  
Shudder through each nerve and fibre,  
Heard the water gurgle round him      135  
As he leaped and staggered through it,  
Sick at heart, and faint and weary.

Crosswise then did Hiawatha  
Drag his birch-canoe for safety,  
Lest from out the jaws of Nahma,      140  
In the turmoil and confusion,  
Forth he might be hurled and perish.  
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
Frisked and chattered very gayly,  
Toiled and tugged with Hiawatha      145  
Till the labor was completed.

Then said Hiawatha to him,  
“O my little friend, the squirrel,  
Bravely have you toiled to help me;  
Take the thanks of Hiawatha,      150  
And the name which now he gives you;  
For hereafter and forever  
Boys shall call you Adjidaumo,  
Tail-in-air the boys shall call you!”

And again the sturgeon, Nahma,      155

Gasped and quivered in the water,  
Then was still, and drifted landward  
Till he grated on the pebbles,  
Till the listening Hiawatha  
Heard him grate upon the margin,  
Felt him strand upon the pebbles,  
Knew that Nahma, King of Fishes,  
Lay there dead upon the margin.

160

Then he heard a clang and flapping,

As of many wings assembling, 165

Heard a screaming and confusion,

As of birds of prey contending,

Saw a gleam of light above him,

Shining through the ribs of Nahma,

Saw the glittering eyes of sea-gulls,

170

Of Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, peering,

Gazing at him through the opening,

Heard them saying to each other,

"'T is our brother, Hiawatha!"

And he shouted from below them,

175

Cried exulting from the caverns:

"O ye sea-gulls! O my brothers!

I have slain the sturgeon, Nahma;

Make the rifts a little larger,

With your claws the openings widen, 180

Set me free from this dark prison,  
And henceforward and forever  
Men shall speak of your achievements,  
Calling you Kayoshk, the sea-gulls,  
Yes, Kayoshk, the Noble Scratchers!"

185

And the wild and clamorous sea-gulls  
Toiled with beak and claws together,  
Made the rifts and openings wider  
In the mighty ribs of Nahma,  
And from peril and from prison,

190

From the body of the sturgeon,  
From the peril of the water,  
They released my Hiawatha.

He was standing near his wigwam,  
On the margin of the water,  
And he called to old Nokomis,  
Called and beckoned to Nokomis,  
Pointed to the sturgeon, Nahma,  
Lying lifeless on the pebbles,  
With the sea-gulls feeding on him.

195

"I have slain the Mishe-Nahma,  
Slain the King of Fishes!" said he;  
"Look! the sea-gulls feed upon him,  
Yes, my friends Kayoshk, the sea-gulls;  
Drive them not awav. Nokomis,

200

205

## 96 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

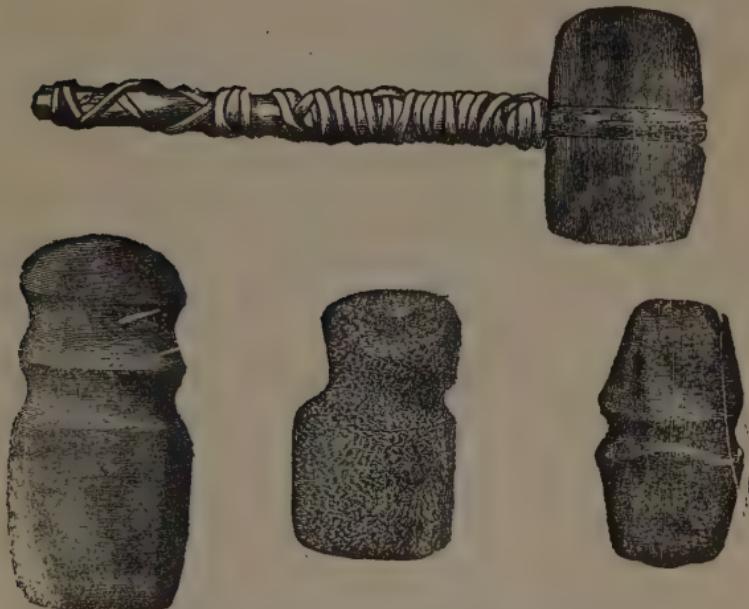
They have saved me from great peril  
In the body of the sturgeon,  
Wait until their meal is ended,  
Till their craws are full with feasting,  
Till they homeward fly, at sunset,      210  
To their nests among the marshes;  
Then bring all your pots and kettles,  
And make oil for us in Winter."

And she waited till the sun set,  
Till the pallid moon, the Night-sun,      215  
Rose above the tranquil water,  
Till Kayoshk, the sated sea-gulls,  
From their banquet rose with clamor,  
And across the fiery sunset  
Winged their way to far-off islands,      220  
To their nests among the rushes

To his sleep went Hiawatha,  
And Nokomis to her labor,  
Toiling patient in the moonlight,  
Till the sun and moon changed places,      225  
Till the sky was red with sunrise,  
And Kayoshk, the hungry sea-gulls,  
Came back from the reedy islands,  
Clamorous for their morning banquet.

Three whole days and nights alternate 230

Old Nokomis and the sea-gulls  
Stripped the oily flesh of Nahma,  
Till the waves washed through the ~~rib~~-bones,  
Till the sea-gulls came no longer,  
And upon the sands lay nothing                  235  
But the skeleton of Nahma.



*Stone Axes of the Blackfeet Indian.*



*Sioux Indians, in Wolf-Skins, Hunting Buffalo.*

## IX.

### HIAWATHA AND THE PEARL-FEATHER.



N the shores of Gitche  
Gumee,  
Of the shining Big-Sea-  
Water,

Stood Nokomis, the old woman,  
Pointing with her finger westward,  
O'er the water pointing westward,  
To the purple clouds of sunset.

Fiercely the red sun descending  
Burned his way along the heavens

Set the sky on fire behind him,  
As war-parties, when retreating,  
Burn the prairies on their war-trail;  
And the moon, the Night-sun, eastward,  
Suddenly starting from his ambush,  
Followed fast those bloody footprints,  
Followed in that fiery war-trail,  
With its glare upon his features.

10

And Nokomis, the old woman,  
Pointing with her finger westward,  
Spake these words to Hiawatha:  
"Yonder dwells the great Pearl-Feather, 20  
Megissogwon, the Magician,  
Manito of Wealth and Wampum,  
Guarded by his fiery serpents,  
Guarded by the black pitch-water.  
You can see his fiery serpents,  
The Kenabeek, the great serpents,  
Coiling, playing in the water;  
You can see the black pitch-water  
Stretching far away beyond them,  
To the purple clouds of sunset!" 25  
"He it was who slew my father,  
By his wicked wiles and cunning,  
When he from the moon descended,

15

30

35

When he came on earth to seek me.  
 He, the mightiest of Magicians,  
 Sends the fever from the marshes,  
 Sends the pestilential vapors,  
 Sends the poisonous exhalations,  
 Sends the white fog from the fen-lands,  
 Sends disease and death among us!

35

"Take your bow, O Hiawatha,  
 Take your arrows, jasper-headed,  
 Take your war-club, Puggawaugun,  
 And your mittens, Minjekahwun,  
 And your birch canoe for sailing,  
 And the oil of Mishe-Nahma,  
 So to smear its sides, that swiftly  
 You may pass the black pitch-water;  
 Slay this merciless magician,  
 Save the people from the fever  
 That he breathes across the fen-lands,  
 And avenge my father's murder!"

40

50

Straightway then my Hiawatha  
 Armed himself with all his war-gear,  
 Launched his birch canoe for sailing;  
 With his palm its sides he patted  
 Said with glee, "Cheemaun, my darling,  
 O my Birch-canoe! leap forward,

55

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

101

- Where you see the fiery serpents,  
Where you see the black pitch-water!" 60  
    Forward leaped Cheemaun exulting,  
And the Noble Hiawatha  
Sang his war-song wild and woful,  
And above him the war-eagle,  
The Keneu, the great war-eagle, 65  
Master of all fowls with feathers,  
Screamed and hurtled through the heavens.  
    Soon he reached the fiery serpents,  
The Kenabeek, the great serpents,  
Lying huge upon the water, 70  
Sparkling, rippling in the water,  
Lying coiled across the passage,  
With their blazing crests uplifted,  
Breathing fiery fogs and vapors,  
So that none could pass beyond them. 75  
    But the fearless Hiawatha  
Cried aloud, and spake in this wise:  
"Let me pass my way, Kenabeek,  
Let me go upon my journey!"  
And they answered, hissing fiercely, 80  
With their fiery breath made answer:  
"Back, go back! O Shaugodaya!  
Back to old Nokomis, Faint-heart!"

Then the angry Hiawatha  
 Raised his mighty bow of ash-tree,      85  
 Seized his arrows, jasper-headed,  
 Shot them fast among the serpents;  
 Every twanging of the bow-string  
 Was a war-cry and a death-cry,  
 Every whizzing of an arrow      90  
 Was a death-song of Kenabeek.  
 Weltering in the bloody water,  
 Dead lay all the fiery serpents,  
 And among them Hiawatha  
 Harmless sailed, and cried exulting:  
 "Onward, O Cheemaun, my darling!  
 Onward to the black pitch-water!"      95  
 Then he took the oil of Nahma,  
 And the bows and sides anointed,  
 Smearèd them well with oil, that swiftly      100  
 He might pass the black pitch-water.  
 All night long he sailed upon it,  
 Sailed upon that sluggish water,  
 Covered with its mould of ages,  
 Black with rotting water-rushes,  
 Rank with flags and leaves of lilies,      105  
 Stagnant, lifeless, dreary, dismal,  
 Lighted by the shimmering moonlight,

And by will-o'-the-wisps illumined,  
Fires by ghosts of dead men kindled,  
In their weary night-encampments.

110

All the air was white with moonlight,  
All the water black with shadow,  
And around him the Suggema,  
The mosquito, sang his war-song,  
And the fire-flies, Wah-wah-taysee,  
Waved their torches to mislead him;  
And the bull-frog, the Dahinda,  
Thrust his head into the moonlight,  
Fixed his yellow eyes upon him,  
Sobbed and sank beneath the surface;  
And anon a thousand whistles,  
Answered over all the fen-lands,  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
Far off on the reedy margin,  
Heralded the hero's coming.

115

120

125

Westward thus fared Hiawatha,  
Toward the realm of Megissogwon,  
Toward the land of the Pearl-Feather,  
Till the level moon stared at him,  
In his face stared pale and haggard,  
Till the sun was hot behind him,  
Till it burned upon his shoulders,

130

And before him on the upland  
He could see the Shining Wigwam  
Of the Manito of Wampum,  
Of the mightiest of Magicians.

135

Then once more Cheemaun he patted,  
To his birch-canoe said, "Onward!"  
And it stirred in all its fibres,  
And with one great bound of triumph  
Leaped across the water-lilies,  
Leaped through tangled flags and rushes,  
And upon the beach beyond them  
Dry-shod landed Hiawatha.

140

Straight he took his bow of ash-tree,  
One end on the sand he rested,  
With his knee he pressed the middle,  
Stretched the faithful bow-string tighter,  
Took an arrow, jasper-headed,  
Shot it at the Shining Wigwam,  
Sent it singing as a herald,  
As a bearer of his message,  
Of his challenge loud and lofty:  
"Come forth from your lodge, Pearl-Feath-  
er!"

150

Hiawatha waits your coming!"

155

Straightway from the Shining Wigwam

Came the mighty Megissogwon,  
Tall of stature, broad of shoulder,  
Dark and terrible in aspect,  
Clad from head to foot in wampum,  
Armed with all his warlike weapons,  
Painted like the sky of morning,  
Streaked with crimson, blue and yellow,  
Crested with great eagle-feathers,  
Streaming upward, streaming outward.

160

165

"Well I know you, Hiawatha!"

Cried he in a voice of thunder,  
In a tone of loud derision.

"Hasten back, O Shaugodaya!  
Hasten back among the women,  
Back to old Nokomis, Faint-heart!  
I will slay you as you stand there,  
As of old I slew her father!"

170

But my Hiawatha answered,  
Nothing daunted, fearing nothing:  
"Big words do not smite like war-clubs,  
Boastful breath is not a bow-string,  
Taunts are not as sharp as arrows,  
Deeds are better things than words are,  
Actions mightier than boastings!"

175

180

Then began the greatest battle

That the sun had ever looked on,  
That the war-birds ever witnessed.

All a Summer's day it lasted,  
From the sunrise to the sunset;  
For the shafts of Hiawatha  
Harmless hit the shirt of wampum,  
Harmless fell the blows he dealt it  
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
Harmless fell the heavy war-club;  
It could dash the rocks asunder,  
But it could not break the meshes  
Of that magic shirt of wampum.

Till at sunset Hiawatha,  
Leaning on his bow of ash-tree,  
Wounded, weary, and desponding,  
With his mighty war-club broken,  
With his mittens torn and tattered,  
And three useless arrows only,  
Paused to rest beneath a pine-tree,  
From whose branches trailed the mosses,  
And whose trunk was coated over  
With the Dead-man's Moccasin-leather,  
With the fungus white and yellow.

Suddenly from the boughs above him  
Sang the Mama, the woodpecker:

185

190

195

200

205

"Aim your arrows, Hiawatha,  
At the head of Megissogwon,  
Strike the tuft of hair upon it,  
At their roots the long black tresses;  
There alone can he be wounded!"

210

Winged with feathers, tipped with jasper,  
Swift flew Hiawatha's arrow,



"Plunging like a wounded bison."

Just as Megissogwon, stooping,  
Raised a heavy stone to throw it.  
Full upon the crown it struck him,  
At the roots of his long tresses,  
And he reeled and staggered forward,  
Plunging like a wounded bison,  
Yes, like Pezhekee, the bison,  
When the snow is on the prairie.

215

220

Swifter flew the second arrow,  
 In the pathway of the other,  
 Piercing deeper than the other,  
 Wounding sorer than the other;  
 And the knees of Megissogwon  
 Shook like windy reeds beneath him,  
 Bent and trembled like the rushes.

225

But the third and latest arrow  
 Swiftest flew, and wounded sorest,  
 And the mighty Megissogwon  
 Saw the fiery eyes of Pauguk,  
 Saw the eyes of Death glare at him,  
 Heard his voice call in the darkness;  
 At the feet of Hiawatha  
 Lifeless lay the great Pearl-Feather,  
 Lay the mightiest of Magicians.

230

235

Then the grateful Hiawatha  
 Called the Mama, the woodpecker,  
 From his perch among the branches  
 Of the melancholy pine-tree,  
 And, in honor of his service,  
 Stained with blood the tuft of feathers  
 On the little head of Mama;  
 Even to this day he wears it,  
 Wears the tuft of crimson feathers

240

245

*As a symbol of his service.*

Then he stripped the shirt of wampum  
From the back of Megissogwon,

250

As a trophy of the battle,

As a signal of his conquest.

On the shore he left the body,

Half on land and half in water,

In the sand his feet were buried,

255

And his face was in the water.

And above him, wheeled and clamored

The Keween, the great war-eagle,

Sailing round in narrower circles,

Hovering nearer, nearer, nearer.

260

From the wigwam Hiawatha

Bore the wealth of Megissogwon,

All his wealth of skins and wampum,

Furs of bison and of beaver,

Furs of sable and of ermine,

265

Wampum belts and strings and pouches,

Quivers wrought with beads of wampum,

Filled with arrows, silver-headed.

Homeward then he sailed exulting,

Homeward through the black pitch-water,

270

Homeward through the weltering serpents.

With the trophies of the battle,

110 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

With a shout and song of triumph.

On the shore stood old Nokomis,

On the shore stood Chibiabos,

275

And the very strong man, Kwasind,

Waiting for the hero's coming,

Listening to his song of triumph.

And the people of the village

Welcomed him with songs and dances,

280

Made a joyous feast, and shouted:

"Honor be to Hiawatha!

He has slain the great Pearl-Feather,

Slain the mightiest of Magicians,

Him who sent the fiery fever,

285

Sent the white fog from the fen-lands,

Sent disease and death among us!"

Ever dear to Hiawatha

Was the memory of Mama!

And in token of his friendship,

290

As a mark of his remembrance,

He adorned and decked his pipe-stem

With the crimson tuft of feathers,

With the blood-red crest of Mama.

But the wealth of Megissogwon,

295

All the trophies of the battle,

He divided with his people,

Shared it equally among them.



*Apache Indians Lassoing Wild Horses.*

---



X.

HIAWATHA'S

WOOING.

S unto the bow the cord  
is,  
So unto the man is wo-  
man,  
Though she bends him,  
she obeys him,

Though she draws him, yet she follows,  
Useless each without the other!"

5

Thus the youthful Hiawatha  
Said within himself and pondered,  
Much perplexed by various feelings,

Listless, longing, hoping, fearing,  
Dreaming still of Minnehaha,  
Of the lovely Laughing Water,  
In the land of the Dacotahs.

"Wed a maiden of your people,"  
Warning said the old Nokomis;  
"Go not eastward, go not westward,  
For a stranger, whom we know not!  
Like a fire upon the hearth-stone  
Is a neighbor's homely daughter,  
Like the starlight or the moonlight  
Is the handsomest of strangers!"

Thus dissuading spake Nokomis,  
And my Hiawatha answered  
Only this: "Dear old Nokomis,  
Very pleasant is the firelight,  
But I like the starlight better,  
Better do I like the moonlight!"

Gravely then said old Nokomis:  
"Bring not here an idle maiden,  
Bring not here a useless woman,  
Hands unskilful, feet unwilling;  
Bring a wife with nimble fingers,  
Heart and hand that move together,  
Feet that run on willing errands!"

Smiling answered Hiawatha:  
 "In the land of the Dacotahs 35  
 Lives the Arrow-maker's daughter,  
 Minnehaha, Laughing Water,  
 Handsomest of all the women.  
 I will bring her to your wigwam,  
 She shall run upon your errands,  
 Be your starlight, moonlight, firelight, 0  
 Be the sunlight of my people!"

Still dissuading said Nokomis:  
 "Bring not to my lodge a stranger  
 From the land of the Dacotahs! 45  
 Very fierce are the Dacotahs,  
 Often is there war between us,  
 There are feuds yet unforgotten,  
 Wounds that ache and still may open!"

Laughing answered Hiawatha: 50  
 "For that reason, if no other,  
 Would I wed the fair Dacotah,  
 That our tribes might be united,  
 That old feuds might be forgotten,  
 And old wounds be healed forever!" 55



Thus departed Hiawatha

To the land of the Dacotahs,  
 To the land of handsome women;  
 Striding over moor and meadow,  
 Through interminable forests,      60  
 Through uninterrupted silence.

With his moccasins of magic,  
 At each stride a mile he measured;  
 Yet the way seemed long before him,  
 And his heart outrun his footsteps;      65  
 And he journeyed without resting,  
 Till he heard the cataract's thunder,  
 Heard the Falls of Minnehaha  
 Calling to him through the silence.  
 "Pleasant is the sound!" he murmured,  
 "Pleasant is the voice that calls me!"      70

On the outskirts of the forest,  
 'Twixt the shadow and the sunshine,  
 Herds of fallow deer were feeding,  
 But they saw not Hiawatha;      75  
 To his bow he whispered, "Fail not!"  
 To his arrow whispered, "Swerve not!"  
 Sent it singing on its errand,  
 To the red heart of the roebuck;  
 Threw the deer across his shoulder,      80  
 And sped forward without pausing.

At the doorway of his wigwam  
Sat the ancient Arrow-maker,  
In the land of the Dacotahs,  
Making arrow-heads of jasper,  
Arrow-heads of chalcedony.  
At his side in all her beauty,  
Sat the lovely Minnehaha,  
Sat his daughter, Laughing Water,  
Plaiting mats of flags and rushes;  
Of the past the old man's thoughts were,  
And the maiden's of the future.

85

90

He was thinking, as he sat there,  
Of the days when with such arrows  
He had struck the deer and bison,  
On the Muskoday, the meadow;  
Shot the wild goose, flying southward,  
On the wing, the clamorous Wawa;  
Thinking of the great war-parties,  
How they came to buy his arrows,  
Could not fight without his arrows.  
Ah, no more such noble warriors  
Could be found on earth as they were!  
Now the men were all like women,  
Only used their tongues for weapons!

95

100

105

She was thinking of a hunter,

**116 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.**

From another tribe and country,  
Young and tall and very handsome,

Who one morning, in the Spring-time,  
Came to buy her father's arrows,

**110**

Sat and rested in the wigwam,  
Lingered long about the doorway,  
Looking back as he departed.

She had heard her father praise him,  
Praise his courage and his wisdom;

**115**

Would he come again for arrows  
To the Falls of Minnehaha?  
On the mat her hands lay idle,  
And her eyes were very dreamy.

Through their thoughts they heard a foot-  
step,

**120**

Heard a rustling in the branches,  
And with glowing cheek and forehead,  
With the deer upon his shoulders,  
Suddenly from out the woodlands  
Hiawatha stood before them.

**125**

Straight the ancient Arrow-maker  
Looked up gravely from his labor,  
Laid aside the unfinished arrow,  
Bade him enter at the doorway,  
Saying, as he rose to meet him,

**130**

"Hiawatha, you are welcome!"

At the feet of Laughing Water  
Hiawatha laid his burden,  
Threw the red deer from his shoulders;  
And the maiden looked up at him,      135  
Looked up from her mat of rushes,  
Said with gentle look and accent,  
"You are welcome, Hiawatha!"

Very spacious was the wigwam,  
Made of deer-skin dressed and whitened. 140  
With the Gods of the Dacotahs  
Drawn and painted on its curtains,  
And so tall the doorway, hardly  
Hiawatha stooped to enter,  
Hardly touched his eagle-feathers      145  
As he entered at the doorway.

Then uprose the Laughing Water,  
From the ground fair Minnehaha,  
Laid aside her mat unfinished,  
Brought forth food and set before them,  
Water brought them from the brooklet,      150  
Gave them food in earthen vessels,  
Gave them drink in bowls of bass-wood,  
Listened while the guest was speaking,  
Listened while her father answered,      155

## 118 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA

But not once her lips she opened,  
Not a single word she uttered.

Yes, as in a dream she listened  
To the words of Hiawatha,  
As he talked of old Nokomis, 160  
Who had nursed him in his childhood,  
As he told of his companions,  
Chibiabos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwasind,  
And of happiness and plenty 165  
In the land of the Ojibways,  
In the pleasant land and peaceful.

“After many years of warfare,  
Many years of strife and bloodshed,  
There is peace between the Ojibways 170  
And the tribe of the Dacotahs.”  
Thus continued Hiawatha,  
And then added, speaking slowly,  
“That this peace may last forever,  
And our hands be clasped more closely, 175  
And our hearts be more united,  
Give me as my wife this maiden,  
Minnehaha, Laughing Water,  
Loveliest of Dacotah women!”  
And the ancient Arrow-maker 180

Paused a moment ere he answered,  
Smoked a little while in silence,  
Looked at Hiawatha proudly,  
Fondly looked at Laughing Water,  
And made answer very gravely:      185  
“Yes, if Minnehaha wishes;  
Let your heart speak, Minnehaha!”

And the lovely Laughing Water  
Seemed more lovely, as she stood there,  
Neither willing nor reluctant,      190  
As she went to Hiawatha,  
Softly took the seat beside him,  
While she said, and blushed to say it,  
“I will follow you, my husband!”

This was Hiawatha’s wooing!      195  
Thus it was he won the daughter  
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,  
In the land of the Dacotahs!

From the wigwam he departed,  
Leading with him Laughing Water;      200  
Hand in hand they went together,  
Through the woodland and the meadow,  
Left the old man standing lonely  
At the doorway of his wigwam,  
Heard the Falls of Minnehaha      205

Calling to them from the distance,  
 Crying to them from afar off,  
 "Fare thee well, O Minnehaha!"

And the ancient Arrow-maker  
 Turned again unto his labor,      210  
 Sat down by his sunny doorway,  
 Murmuring to himself, and saying:  
 "Thus it is our daughters leave us,  
 Those we love, and those who love us!  
 Just when they have learned to help us,      215  
 When we are old and lean upon them,  
 Comes a youth with flaunting feathers,  
 With his flute of reeds, a stranger  
 Wanders piping through the village,  
 Beckons to the fairest maiden,      220  
 And she follows where he leads her,  
 Leaving all things for the stranger!"



Pleasant was the journey homeward,  
 Through interminable forests,  
 Over meadow, over mountain,      225  
 Over river, hill, and hollow.  
 Short it seemed to Hiawatha,  
 Though they journeyed very slowly,

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 121

Though his pace he checked and slackened  
To the steps of Laughing Water. 230

Over wide and rushing rivers  
In his arms he bore the maiden;  
Light he thought her as a feather,  
As the plume upon his head-gear;  
Cleared the tangled pathway for her, 235  
Bent aside the swaying branches,  
Made at night a lodge of branches,  
And a bed with boughs of hemlock,  
And a fire before the doorway  
With the dry cones of the pine-tree. 240

All the travelling winds went with them,  
O'er the meadow, through the forest;  
All the stars of night looked at them,  
Watched with sleepless eyes their slumber;  
From his ambush in the oak-tree 245  
Peeped the squirrel, Adjidaumo,  
Watched with eager eyes the lovers;  
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,  
Scampered from the path before them,  
Peering, peeping from his burrow, 250  
Sat erect upon his haunches,  
Watched with curious eyes the lovers.

Pleasant was the journey homeward!

All the birds sang loud and sweetly  
Songs of happiness and heart's-ease; 255  
Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,  
"Happy are you, Hiawatha,  
Having such a wife to love you!"  
Sang the Opechee, the robin,  
"Happy are you, Laughing Water, 260  
Having such a noble husband!"

From the sky the sun benignant  
Looked upon them through the branches,  
Saying to them, "O my children,  
Love is sunshine, hate is shadow, 265  
Life is checkered shade and sunshine,  
Rule by love, O Hiawatha!"

From the sky the moon looked at them,  
Filled the lodge with mystic splendors,  
Whispered to them, "O my children, 270  
Day is restless, night is quiet,  
Man imperious, woman feeble;  
Half is mine, although I follow;  
Rule by patience, Laughing Water!"

Thus it was they journeyed homeward; 275  
Thus it was that Hiawatha  
To the lodge of old Nokomis  
Brought the moonlight, starlight, firelight,

Brought the sunshine of his people,  
Minnehaha, Laughing Water,  
Handsomest of all the women  
In the land of the Dacotahs,  
In the land of handsome women.

280



*Section of Wampum Belt Presented to Wm. Penn.—  
Emblem of Brotherly Love.*



*Indian Decorated Bowls.*



## XI.

### HIAWATHA'S WEDDING-FEAST.

YOU shall hear how Pau-  
Puk-Keewis,  
How the handsome Yena-  
dizze  
Danced at Hiawatha's wed-  
ding;

How the gentle Chibiabos,  
He the sweetest of musicians,  
Sang his songs of love and longing:  
How Iagoo, the great boaster,  
He the marvellous story-teller,  
Told his tales of strange adventure,

5

That the feast might be more joyous,  
That the time might pass more gayly,  
And the guests be more contented.

10

Sumptuous was the feast Nokomis  
Made at Hiawatha's wedding;



All the bowls were made of bass-wood,  
White and polished very smoothly,  
All the spoons of horn of bison,  
Black and polished very smoothly.

15

She had sent through all the village

.6 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Messengers with wands of willow,                            20  
As a sign of invitation,  
As a token of the feasting;  
And the wedding guests assembled,  
Clad in all their richest raiment,  
Robes of fur and belts of wampum,                            25  
Splendid with their paint and plumage,  
Beautiful with beads and tassels.

First they ate the sturgeon, Nahma,  
And the pike, the Maskenozha,  
Caught and cooked by old Nokomis;                            30  
Then on pemican they feasted,  
Pemican and buffalo marrow,  
Haunch of deer and hump of bison,  
Yellow cakes of the Mondamin,  
And the wild rice of the river.                                    35

But the gracious Hiawatha,  
And the lovely Laughing Water,  
And the careful old Nokomis,  
Tasted not the food before them,  
Only waited on the others,    40  
Only served their guests in silence.

And when all the guests had finished,  
Old Nokomis, brisk and busy,  
From an ample pouch of otter,

Filled the red stone pipes for smoking      45  
With tobacco from the South-land,  
Mixed with bark of the red willow,  
And with herbs and leaves of fragrance.

Then she said, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Dance for us your merry dances,      50  
Dance the Beggar's Dance to please us,  
That the feast may be more joyous,  
That the time may pass more gayly,  
And our guests be more contented!"

Then the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis,      55  
He the idle Yenadizze,  
He the merry mischief-maker,  
Whom the people called the Storm-Fool,  
Rose among the guests assembled.

Skilled was he in sports and pastimes,      60  
In the merry dance of snow-shoes,  
In the play of quoits and ball-play ;  
Skilled was he in games of hazard,  
In all games of skill and hazard,  
Pugasaing, the Bowl and Counters,      65  
Kuntassoo, the Game of Plum-stones,  
Though the warriors called him Faint-heart,  
Called him coward, Shaugodaya,  
Idler, gambler, Yenadizze,

26 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Little needed he their jesting,  
Little cared he for their insults,  
For the women and the maidens

27



*Buckskin Shirt, Embroidered with Wampum.*

Loved the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis.  
He was dressed in shirt of doe-skin,  
White and soft, and fringed with ermine,

28

All inwrought with beads of wampum;  
He was dressed in deer-skin leggings,  
Fringed with hedgehog quills and ermine,  
And in moccasins of buck-skin,  
Thick with quills and beads embroidered.   80  
On his head were plumes of swan's down,  
On his heels were tails of foxes,  
In one hand a fan of feathers,  
And a pipe was in the other.

Barred with streaks of red and yellow,   85  
Streaks of blue and bright vermillion,  
Shone the face of Pau-Puk-Keewis.  
From his forehead fell his tresses,  
Smooth, and parted like a woman's,  
Shining bright with oil, and plaited,   90  
Hung with braids of scented grasses,  
As among the guests assembled,  
To the sound of flutes and singing,  
To the sound of drums and voices,  
Rose the handsome Pau-Puk-Keewis,   95  
And began his mystic dances.

First he danced a solemn measure,  
Very slow in step and gesture,  
In and out among the pine-trees,  
Through the shadows and the sunshine,   100

130 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Treading softly like a panther.  
Then more swiftly and still swifter,  
Whirling, spinning round in circles,  
Leaping o'er the guests assembled,  
Eddying round and round the wigwam, 105  
Till the leaves went whirling with him,  
Till the dust and wind together  
Swept in eddies round about him.

Then along the sandy margin  
Of the lake, the Big-Sea-Water, 110  
On he sped with frenzied gestures,  
Stamped upon the sand, and tossed it  
Wildly in the air around him;  
Till the wind became a whirlwind,  
Till the sand was blown and sifted 115  
Like great snowdrifts o'er the landscape,  
Heaping all the shores with Sand Dunes,  
Sand Hills of the Nagow Wudjoo!

Thus the merry Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Danced his Beggar's Dance to please them, 120  
And, returning, sat down laughing  
There among the guests assembled,  
Sat and fanned himself serenely  
With his fan of turkey-feathers.

Then they said to Chibiabos, 125

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

131

To the friend of Hiawatha,  
To the sweetest of all singers,  
To the best of all musicians,  
"Sing to us, O Chibiabos!  
Songs of love and songs of longing,      130  
That the feast may be more joyous,  
That the time may pass more gayly,  
And our guests be more contented!"

And the gentle Chibiabos  
Sang in accents sweet and tender,      135  
Sang in tones of deep emotion,  
Songs of love and songs of longing;  
Looking still at Hiawatha,  
Looking at fair Laughing Water,  
Sang he softly, sang in this wise:

"Onaway! Awake, beloved!  
Thou the wild-flower of the forest!  
Thou the wild-bird of the prairie!  
Thou with eyes so soft and fawn-like!

"If thou only lookest at me,      145  
I am happy, I am happy,  
As the lilies of the prairie,  
When they feel the dew upon them!

"Sweet thy breath is as the fragrance  
Of the wild-flowers in the morning,

150

As their fragrance is at evening,  
In the Moðn when leaves are falling.

“Does not all the blood within me  
Leap to meet thee, leap to meet thee,  
As the springs to meet the sunshine,      155  
In the Moon when nights are brightest?

“Onaway! my heart sings to thee,  
Sings with joy when thou art near me,  
As the sighing, singing branches  
In the pleasant Moon of Strawberries!      165

“When thou art not pleased, beloved,  
Then my heart is sad and darkened,  
As the shining river darkens  
When the clouds drop shadows on it!

“When thou smilest, my beloved,      165  
Then my troubled heart is brightened,  
As in sunshine gleam the ripples  
That the cold wind makes in rivers.

“Smiles the earth, and smile the waters,  
Smile the cloudless skies above us,      170  
But I lose the way of smiling  
When thou art no longer near me!

“I myself, myself! behold me!  
Blood of my beating heart, behold me!  
O awake, awake, beloved!      175

Onaway! awake, beloved!"

Thus the gentle Chibiabos  
Sang his song of love and longing;  
And Iagoo, the great boaster,  
He the marvellous story-teller,  
He the friend of old Nokomis,  
Jealous of the sweet musician,  
Jealous of the applause they gave him,  
Saw in all the eyes around him,  
Saw in all their looks and gestures,  
That the wedding guests assembled  
Longed to hear his pleasant stories,  
His immeasurable falsehoods.

Very boastful was Iagoo;  
Never heard he an adventure  
But himself had met a greater;  
Never any deed of daring  
But himself had done a bolder;  
Never any marvellous story  
But himself could tell a stranger.

Would you listen to his boasting,  
Would you only give him credence,  
No one ever shot an arrow  
Half so far and high as he had;  
Ever caught so many fishes,

180

185

190

195

200

Ever killed so many reindeer,  
Ever trapped so many beaver!  
None could run so fast as he could.



"And the wedding guests assembled  
Clad in all their richest raiment."

None could dive so deep as he could,  
None could swim so far as he could;  
None had made so many journeys,  
None had seen so many wonders,

As this wonderful Iagoo,  
As this marvellous story-teller!

Thus his name became a by-word  
And a jest among the people;  
And whene'er a boastful hunter  
Praised his own address too highly,  
Or a warrior, home returning,  
Talked too much of his achievements,  
All his hearers cried, "Iagoo!  
Here's Iagoo come among us!"

He it was who carved the cradle  
Of the little Hiawatha,  
Carved its framework out of linden,  
Bound it strong with reindeer sinews;  
He it was who taught him later  
How to make his bows and arrows,  
How to make the bows of ash-tree,  
And the arrows of the oak-tree.  
So among the guests assembled  
At my Hiawatha's wedding  
Sat Iagoo, old and ugly,  
Sat the marvellous story-teller.

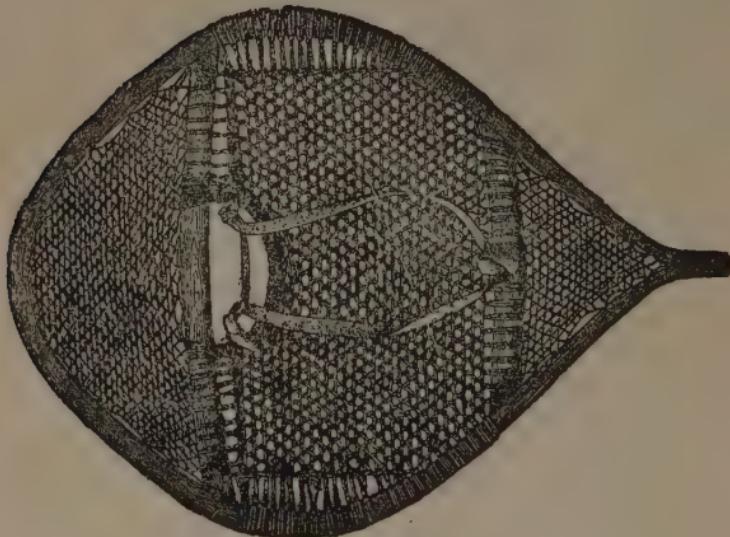
And they said, "O good Iagoo,  
Tell us now a tale of wonder,  
Tell us of some strange adventure,

That the feast may be more joyous,  
That the time may pass more gayly,  
And our guests be more contented!"

235

And Iago answered straightway,  
"You shall hear a tale of wonder,  
You shall hear the strange adventures  
Of Osseo, the Magician,  
From the Evening Star descended."

240





*Iroquois Moccasins of Buckskin.*

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## XII.

### THE SON OF THE EVENING STAR.

AN it be the sun descend-  
ing  
O'er the level plain of  
water?  
Or the Red Swan floating,  
flying,

Wounded by the magic arrow,  
Staining all the waves with crimson,  
With the crimson of its life-blood,  
Filling all the air with splendor,

With the splendor of its plumage?

Yes; it is the sun descending,  
Sinking down into the water;  
All the sky is stained with purple,  
All the water flushed with crimson!  
No; it is the Red Swan floating,  
Diving down beneath the water;  
To the sky its wings are lifted,  
With its blood the waves are reddened!

Over it the Star of Evening  
Melts and trembles through the purple,  
Hangs suspended in the twilight  
No; it is a bead of wampum  
On the robes of the Great Spirit,  
As he passes through the twilight,  
Walks in silence through the heavens.

This with joy beheld Iagoo  
And he said in haste: "Behold it!  
See the sacred Star of Evening!  
You shall hear a tale of wonder,  
Hear the story of Osseo!  
Son of the Evening Star, Osseo!"

"Once, in days no more remembered,  
Ages nearer the beginning,  
When the heavens were closer to us,

And the Gods were more familiar,  
In the North-land lived a hunter,  
With ten young and comely daughters,      35  
Tall and lithe as wands of willow;  
Only Oweenee, the youngest,  
She the wilful and the wayward,  
She the silent, dreamy maiden,  
Was the fairest of the sisters.      40

“All these women married warriors,  
Married brave and haughty husbands;  
Only Oweenee, the youngest,  
Laughed and flouted all her lovers,  
All her young and handsome suitors,      45  
And then married old Osseo,  
Old Osseo, poor and ugly,  
Broken with age and weak with coughing,  
Always coughing like a squirrel.

“Ah, but beautiful within him      50  
Was the spirit of Osseo,  
From the Evening Star descended,  
Star of Evening, Star of Woman,  
Star of tenderness and passion!  
All its fire was in his bosom  
All its beauty in his spirit,  
All its mystery in his being.      55

All its splendor in his language!

"And her lovers, the rejected,  
Handsome men with belts of wampum,      60  
Handsome men with paint and feathers,  
Pointed at her in derision,  
Followed her with jest and laughter.  
But she said: 'I care not for you,  
Care not for your belts of wampum,      65  
Care not for your paint and feathers,  
Care not for your jest and laughter;  
I am happy with Osseo!'

"Once to some great feast invited,  
Through the damp and dusk of evening      70  
Walked together the ten sisters,  
Walked together with their husbands;  
Slowly followed old Osseo,  
With fair Oweenee beside him;  
All the others chatted gayly,      75  
These two only walked in silence.

"At the western sky Osseo  
Gazed intent, as if imploring,  
Often stopped and gazed imploring  
At the trembling Star of Evening,      80  
At the tender Star of Woman;  
And they heard him murmur softly,  
'Ah, showain nemeshin, Nosa!'

Pity, pity me, my father!

“ ‘Listen!’ said the elder sister, 85  
 ‘He is praying to his father!  
 What a pity that the old man  
 Does not stumble in the pathway,  
 Does not break his neck by falling?’  
 And they laughed till all the forest  
 Rang with their unseemly laughter.

“On their pathway through the woodlands  
 Lay an oak, by storms uprooted,  
 Lay the great trunk of an oak-tree,  
 Buried half in leaves and mosses, 95  
 Mouldering, crumbling, huge and hollow.  
 And Osseo, when he saw it,  
 Gave a shout, a cry of anguish,  
 Leaped into its yawning cavern,  
 At one end went in an old man,  
 Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly; 100  
 From the other came a young man,  
 Tall and straight and strong and handsome.

“Thus Osseo was transfigured  
 Thus restored to youth and beauty; 105  
 But, alas for good Osseo,  
 And for Oweenee, the faithful!  
 Strangely, too, was she transfigured.

## 142 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

Changed into a weak old woman,  
 With a staff she tottered onward,  
 Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly!  
 And the sisters and their husbands  
 Laughed until the echoing forest  
 Rang with their unseemly laughter.

"But Osseo turned not from her,  
 Walked with slower step beside her,  
 Took her hand, as brown and withered  
 As an oak-leaf is in winter,  
 Called her sweetheart, Nénemoosha,  
 Soothed her with soft words of kindness,  
 Till they reached the lodge of feasting,  
 Till they sat down in the wigwam,  
 Sacred to the Star of Evening,  
 To the tender Star of Woman.

"Wrapt in visions, lost in dreaming,  
 At the banquet sat Osseo;  
 All were merry, all were happy,  
 All were joyous but Osseo.

Neither food nor drink he tasted,  
 Neither did he speak nor listen,  
 But as one bewildered sat he,  
 Looking dreamily and sadly,  
 First at Oweenee, then upward

110

115

120

125

130

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

143

At the gleaming sky above them.

"Then a voice was heard, a whisper, 135

Coming from the starry distance,

Coming from the empty vastness,

Low, and musical, and tender;

And the voice said: 'O Osseo!

O my son, my best beloved!

140

Broken are the spells that bound you,

All the charms of the magicians,

All the magic powers of evil;

Come to me; ascend, Osseo!

"Taste the food that stands before you: 145

It is blessed and enchanted,

It has magic virtues in it,

It will change you to a spirit.

All your bowls and all your kettles

Shall be wood and clay no longer; 150

But the bowls be changed to wampum,

And the kettles shall be silver;

They shall shine like shells of scarlet,

Like the fire shall gleam and glimmer.

"And the women shall no longer 155

Bear the dreary doom of labor,

But be changed to birds, and glisten

With the beauty of the starlight.

Painted with the dusky splendors  
Of the skies and clouds of evening!" 160

"What Osseo heard as whispers.  
What as words he comprehended,  
Was but music to the others,  
Music as of birds afar off,  
Of the whippoorwill afar off, 165  
Of the lonely Wawonaissa  
Singing in the darksome forest.

"Then the lodge began to tremble,  
Straight began to shake and tremble,  
And they felt it rising, rising, 170  
Slowly through the air ascending,  
From the darkness of the tree-tops  
Forth into the dewy starlight,  
Till it passed the topmost branches;  
And behold! the wooden dishes 175  
All were changed to shells of scarlet!  
And behold! the earthen kettles  
All were changed to bowls of silver!  
And the roof-poles of the wigwam  
Were as glittering rods of silver, 180  
And the roof of bark upon them  
As the shining shards of beetles.  
"Then Osseo gazed around him,

And he saw the nine fair sisters,  
All the sisters and their husbands,      185  
Changed to birds of various plumage.  
Some were jays and some were magpies,  
Others thrushes, others blackbirds;  
And they hopped, and sang, and twittered,  
Perked and fluttered all their feathers,      190  
Strutted in their shining plumage,  
And their tails like fans unfolded.

“Only Oweenee, the youngest,  
Was not changed, but sat in silence,  
Wasted, wrinkled, old, and ugly,      195  
Looking sadly at the others;  
Till Osseo, gazing upward,  
Gave another cry of anguish,  
Such a cry as he had uttered  
By the oak-tree in the forest.      200

“Then returned her youth and beauty,  
And her soiled and tattered garments  
Were transformed to robes of ermine,  
And her staff became a feather,  
Yes, a shining silver feather!      205

“And again the wigwam trembled,  
Swayed and rushed through airy currents,  
Through transparent cloud and vapor,

## 146 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

- And amid celestial splendors  
 On the Evening Star alighted,                           210  
 As a snow-flake falls on snow-flake,  
 As a leaf drops on a river,  
 As the thistle-down on water.
- "Forth with cheerful words of welcome  
 Came the father of Osseo,                           215  
 He with radiant locks of silver,  
 He with eyes serene and tender.  
 And he said: 'My son, Osseo,  
 Hang the cage of birds you bring there,  
 Hang the cage with rods of silver,                   220  
 And the birds with glistening feathers,  
 At the doorway of my wigwam.'
- "At the door he hung the bird-cage,  
 And they entered in and gladly  
 Listened to Osseo's father,                           225  
 Ruler of the Star of Evening,  
 As he said: 'O my Osseo!  
 I have had compassion on you,  
 Given you back your youth and beauty,  
 Into birds of various plumage                       230  
 Changed your sisters and their husbands;  
 Changed them thus because they mocked you;  
 In the figure of the old man.

- In that aspect sad and wrinkled,  
Could not see your heart of passion,      235  
Could not see your youth immortal;  
Only Oweenee, the faithful,  
Saw your naked heart and loved you.
- "In the lodge that glimmers yonder,  
In the little star that twinkles      240  
Through the vapors, on the left hand,  
Lives the envious Evil Spirit,  
The Wabeno, the magician,  
Who transformed you to an old man.  
Take heed lest his beams fall on you,      245  
For the rays he darts around him  
Are the power of his enchantment,  
Are the arrows that he uses.'
- "Many years, in peace and quiet,  
On the peaceful Star of Evening      250  
Dwelt Osseo with his father;  
Many years, in song and flutter,  
At the doorway of the wigwam,  
Hung the cage with rods of silver,  
And fair Oweenee, the faithful,      255  
Bore a son unto Osseo,  
With the beauty of his mother,  
With the courage of his father.

"And the boy grew up and prospered,  
And Osseo, to delight him,                            260  
Made him little bows and arrows,  
Opened the great cage of silver,  
And let loose his aunts and uncles,  
All those birds with glossy feathers,  
For his little son to shoot at.                            265

"Round and round they wheeled and darted,  
Filled the Evening Star with music,  
With their songs of joy and freedom;  
Filled the Evening Star with splendor,  
With the fluttering of their plumage;                    270  
Till the boy, the little hunter,  
Bent his bow and shot an arrow,  
Shot a swift and fatal arrow,  
And a bird, with shining feathers,  
At his feet fell wounded sorely.                            275

"But, O wondrous transformation!  
'T was no bird he saw before him!  
'T was a beautiful young woman,  
With the arrow in her bosom!

"When her blood fell on the planet,                    280  
On the sacred Star of Evening,  
Broken was the spell of magic,  
Powerless was the strange enchantment,

And the youth, the fearless bowman,  
Suddenly felt himself descending,      285  
Held by unseen hands, but sinking  
Downward through the empty spaces,  
Downward through the clouds and vapors,  
Till he rested on an island,  
On an island, green and grassy,      290  
Yonder in the Big-Sea-Water.

"After him he saw descending  
All the birds with shining feathers,  
Fluttering, falling, wafted downward,  
Like the painted leaves of Autumn;      295  
And the lodge with poles of silver,  
With its roof like wings of beetles,  
Like the shining shards of beetles,  
By the winds of heaven uplifted,  
Slowly sank upon the island,      300  
Bringing back the good Osseo,  
Bringing Oweenee, the faithful.

"Then the birds, again transfigured,  
Reassumed the shape of mortals,  
Took their shape, but not their stature;      305  
They remained as Little People,  
Like the pygmies, the Puk-Wudjies,  
**And on pleasant nights of Summer,**

## 150 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

When the Evening Star was shining,  
 Hand in hand they danced together      310  
 On the island's craggy headlands,  
 On the sand-beach low and level

"Still their glittering lodge is seen there,  
 On the tranquil Summer evenings,  
 And upon the shore the fisher      315  
 Sometimes hears their happy voices,  
 Sees them dancing in the starlight!"

When the story was completed,  
 When the wondrous tale was ended,  
 Looking round upon his listeners,      320  
 Solemnly Iagoo added:  
 "There are great men, I have known such,  
 Whom their people understand not,  
 Whom they even make a jest of,  
 Scoff and jeer at in derision.      325  
 From the story of Osseo  
 Let them learn the fate of jesters!"

All the wedding guests delighted  
 Listened to the marvellous story,  
 Listened laughing and applauding,  
 And they whispered to each other:      330  
 "Does he mean himself, I wonder?  
 And are we the aunts and uncles?"

Then again sang Chibiabos,  
Sang a song of love and longing,  
In those accents sweet and tender,  
In those tones of pensive sadness,  
Sang a maiden's lamentation  
For her lover, her Algonquin.

335

"When I think of my beloved,  
Ah me! think of my beloved,  
When my heart is thinking of him,  
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

340

"Ah, me! when I parted from him,  
Round my neck he hung the wampum,  
As a pledge, the snow-white wampum,  
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

345

"I will go with you, he whispered,  
Ah me! to your native country;  
Let me go with you, he whispered,  
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

350

"Far away, away, I answered,  
Very far away, I answered,  
Ah me! is my native country,  
O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!

355

"When I looked back to behold him,  
Where we parted, to behold him,  
After me he still was gazing,

- O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!  
 "By the tree he still was standing,      360  
 By the fallen tree was standing,  
 That had dropped into the water,  
 O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!
- "When I think of my beloved,  
 Ah me! think of my beloved,      365  
 When my heart is thinking of him,  
 O my sweetheart, my Algonquin!"
- Such was Hiawatha's Wedding,  
 Such the dance of Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
 Such the story of Iagoo,      370  
 Such the songs of Chibiabos;  
 Thus the wedding banquet ended,  
 And the wedding guests departed,  
 Leaving Hiawatha happy  
 With the night and Minnehaha.      375



*Apache Indians Lassoing Wild Horses.*

---

### XIII.

#### BLESSING THE CORN-FIELDS.



ING, O song of Hiawatha,  
Of the happy days that fol-  
lowed,  
In the land of the Ojibways,  
In the pleasant land and  
peaceful!  
Sing the mysteries of Mon-  
damin, 5  
Sing the Blessing of the  
Corn-fields!

Buried was the bloody hatchet,  
Buried was the dreadful war-club,  
Buried were all warlike weapons,

And the war-cry was forgotten. 10

There was peace among the nations;  
Unmolested roved the hunters,  
Built the birch canoe for sailing,  
Caught the fish in lake and river,  
Shot the deer and trapped the beaver; 15  
Unmolested worked the women,  
Made their sugar from the maple,  
Gathered wild rice in the meadows,  
Dressed the skins of deer and beaver.

All around the happy village 20  
Stood the maize-fields, green and shining,  
Waved the green plumes of Mondamin,  
Waved his soft and sunny tresses,  
Filling all the land with plenty.

'T was the women who in Spring-time 25  
Planted the broad fields and fruitful,  
Buried in the earth Mondamin;  
'T was the women who in Autumn  
Stripped the yellow husks of harvest,  
Stripped the garments from Mondamin, 30  
Even as Hiawatha taught them.

Once, when all the maize was planted,  
Hiawatha, wise and thoughtful,

- Spake and said to Minnehaha,  
To his wife, the Laughing Water:                   35  
“You shall bless to-night the corn-fields,  
Draw a magic circle round them,  
To protect them from destruction,  
Blast of mildew, blight of insect,  
Wagemin, the thief of corn-fields,                   40  
Paimosaid, who steals the maize-ear!  
    “In the night, when all is silence,  
In the night, when all is darkness,  
When the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin,  
Shuts the doors of all the wigwams,  
So that not an ear can hear you,                   45  
So that not an eye can see you,  
Rise up from your bed in silence,  
Lay aside your garments wholly,  
Walk around the fields you planted,  
Round the borders of the corn-fields,                   50  
Covered by your tresses only,  
Robed with darkness as a garment.  
    “Thus the fields shall be more fruitful,  
And the passing of your footsteps                   55  
Draw a magic circle round them,  
So that neither blight nor mildew,

Neither burrowing worm nor insect,  
 Shall pass o'er the magic circle;  
 Not the dragon-fly, Kwo-ne-she,  
 Nor the spider, Subbekashe,  
 Nor the grasshopper, Pah-puk-keena,  
 Nor the mighty caterpillar,  
 Way-muk-kwana, with the bear-skin,  
 King of all the caterpillars!"

60

65

On the tree-tops near the corn-fields  
 Sat the hungry crows and ravens,  
 Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens,  
 With his band of black marauders,  
 And they laughed at Hiawatha,  
 Till the tree-tops shook with laughter,  
 With their melancholy laughter  
 At the words of Hiawatha.

70

"Hear him!" said they; "hear the Wise ~~man~~,  
 Hear the plots of Hiawatha!"

75

When the noiseless night descended,  
 Broad and dark o'er field and forest,  
 When the mournful Wawonaissa  
 Sorrowing sang among the hemlocks,  
 And the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin,  
 Shut the doors of all the wigwams,

80

From her bed rose Laughing Water,  
Laid aside her garments wholly,  
And with darkness clothed and guarded,  
Unashamed and unaffrighted,  
Walked securely round the corn-fields,  
Drew the sacred, magic circle  
Of her footprints round the corn-fields.

No one but the Midnight only  
Saw her beauty in the darkness,  
No one but the Wawonaissa  
Heard the panting of her bosom;  
Guskewau, the darkness, wrapped her  
Closely in his sacred mantle,  
So that none might see her beauty,  
So that none might boast, "I saw her!"

On the morrow, as the day dawned,  
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens,  
Gathered all his black marauders,  
Crows and blackbirds, jays and ravens,  
Clamorous on the dusky tree-tops,  
And descended, fast and fearless,  
On the fields of Hiawatha,  
On the grave of the Mondamin.

"We will drag Mondamin," said they,

105

"From the grave where he is buried,  
Spite of all the magic circles  
Laughing Water draws around it,  
Spite of all the sacred footprints  
Minnehaha stamps upon it!"

110

But the wary Hiawatha,  
Ever thoughtful, careful, watchful,  
Had o'erheard the scornful laughter  
When they mocked him from the tree-tops.  
"Kaw!" he said, "my friends the ravens! 115  
Kahgahgee, my King of Ravens!  
I will teach you all a lesson  
That shall not be soon forgotten!"

He had risen before the daybreak,  
He had spread o'er all the corn-fields 120  
Snares to catch the black marauders,  
And was lying now in ambush  
In the neighboring grove of pine-trees,  
Waiting for the crows and blackbirds,  
Waiting for the jays and ravens. 125

Soon they came with caw and clamor,  
Rush of wings and cry of voices,  
To their work of devastation,  
Settling down upon the corn-fields,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

159

Delving deep with beak and talon,  
For the body of Mondamin. 130  
And with all their craft and cunning  
All their skill in wiles of warfare,  
They perceived no danger near them,  
Till their claws became entangled,  
Till they found themselves imprisoned 135  
In the snares of Hiawatha.

From his place of ambush came he,  
Striding terrible among them,  
And so awful was his aspect 140  
That the bravest quailed with terror.  
Without mercy he destroyed them  
Right and left, by tens and twenties,  
And their wretched, lifeless bodies  
Hung aloft on poles for scarecrows 145  
Round the consecrated corn-fields,  
As a signal of his vengeance,  
As a warning to marauders.

Only Kahgahgee, the leader,  
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens, 150  
He alone was spared among them  
As a hostage for his people.  
With his prisoner-string he bound him,

Led him captive to his wigwam,  
 Tied him fast with cords of elm-bark:  
 To the ridge-pole of his wigwam.

155

"Kahgahgee, my raven!" said he,  
 "You the leader of the robbers,  
 You the plotter of this mischief,  
 The contriver of this outrage,  
 I will keep you, I will hold you,  
 As a hostage for your people,  
 As a pledge of good behavior!"

160

And he left him, grim and sulky.  
 Sitting in the morning sunshine  
 On the summit of the wigwam,  
 Croaking fiercely his displeasure,  
 Flapping his great sable pinions,  
 Vainly struggling for his freedom,  
 Vainly calling on his people!

165

Summer passed, and Shawondasee  
 Breathed his sighs o'er all the landscape,  
 From the South-land sent his ardors,  
 Wafted kisses warm and tender;  
 And the maize-field grew and ripened,  
 Till it stood in all the splendor  
 Of its garments green and yellow.

170

175

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

161

Of its tassels and its plumage,  
And the maize-ears full and shining  
Gleamed from bursting sheaths of verdure. 180

Then Nokomis, the old woman,  
Spake, and said to Minnehaha:  
“ ’T is the Moon when leaves are falling;  
All the wild-rice has been gathered,  
And the maize is ripe and ready; 185  
Let us gather in the harvest,  
Let us wrestle with Mondamin,  
Strip him of his plumes and tassels,  
Of his garments green and yellow!”

And the merry Laughing Water 190  
Went rejoicing from the wigwam,  
With Nokomis, old and wrinkled,  
And they called the women round them,  
Called the young men and the maidens,  
To the harvest of the corn-fields, 195  
To the husking of the maize-ear.

On the border of the forest,  
Underneath the fragrant pine-trees,  
Sat the old men and the warriors  
Smoking in the pleasant shadow. 200  
In uninterrupted silence

Looked they at the gamesome labor  
 Of the young men and the women;  
 Listened to their noisy talking,  
 To their laughter and their singing,      205  
 Heard them chattering like the magpies,  
 Heard them laughing like the blue-jays,  
 Heard them singing like the robins.

And whene'er some lucky maiden  
 Found a red ear in the husking,      210  
 Found a maize-ear red as blood is,  
 "Nushka!" cried they all together,  
 "Nushka! you shall have a sweetheart,  
 You shall have a handsome husband!"  
 "Ugh!" the old men all responded,      215  
 From their seats beneath the pine-trees.

And whene'er a youth or maiden  
 Found a crooked ear in husking,  
 Found a maize-ear in the husking  
 Blighted, mildewed, or misshapen,      220  
 Then they laughed and sang together,  
 Crept and limped about the corn-fields,  
 Mimicked in their gait and gestures  
 Some old man, bent almost double,  
 Singing singly or together:      225

"Wagemin, the thief of corn-fields!  
Paimosaid, the skulking robber!"

Till the corn-fields rang with laughter,  
Till from Hiawatha's wigwam  
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens,      230  
Screamed and quivered in his anger,  
And from all the neighboring tree-tops  
Cawed and croaked the black marauders.  
"Ugh!" the old men all responded,  
From their seats beneath the pine-trees!      235





## XIV.

### PICTURE-WRITING.

N those days said Hia-watha,  
“Lo! how all things fade  
and perish!

From the memory of the old men  
Pass away the great traditions,  
The achievements of the warriors,      5  
The adventures of the hunters,  
All the wisdom of the Medas,  
All the craft of the Wabenos,  
All the marvellous dreams and visions  
Of the Jossakeeds, the Prophets!      10

“Great men die and are forgotten,  
Wise men speak; their words of wisdom  
Perish in the ears that hear them,

Do not reach the generations  
That, as yet unborn, are waiting      15  
In the great, mysterious darkness  
Of the speechless days that shall be!

"On the grave-posts of our fathers  
Are no signs, no figures painted;  
Who are in those graves we know not,      20  
Only know they are our fathers.  
Of what kith they are and kindred,  
From what old, ancestral Totem,  
Be it Eagle, Bear or Beaver,  
They descended, this we know not,      25  
Only know they are our fathers.

"Face to face we speak together,  
But we cannot speak when absent,  
Cannot send our voices from us  
To the friends that dwell afar off;      30  
Cannot send a secret message,  
But the bearer learns our secret,  
May pervert it, may betray it,  
May reveal it unto others."

Thus said Hiawatha, walking  
In the solitary forest,  
Pondering, musing in the forest,  
On the welfare of his people.      35

From his pouch he took his colors,  
 Took his paints of different colors,  
 On the smooth bark of a birch-tree  
 Painted many shapes and figures,  
 Wonderful and mystic figures,  
 And each figure had a meaning,  
 Each some word or thought suggested.      40

Gitche Manito the Mighty,  
 He, the Master of Life, was painted  
 As an egg, with points projecting  
 To the four winds of the heavens.  
 Everywhere is the Great Spirit,  
 Was the meaning of this symbol.      45

Mitche Manito the Mighty,  
 He the dreadful Spirit of Evil,  
 As a serpent was depicted,  
 As Kenabeek, the great serpent.  
 Very crafty, very cunning,  
 Is the creeping Spirit of Evil,  
 Was the meaning of this symbol.      55

Life and Death he drew as circles,  
 Life was white, but Death was darkened;  
 Sun and moon and stars he painted,  
 Man and beast, and fish and reptile,  
 Forests, mountains, lakes, and rivers.      60

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

107

For the earth he drew a straight line,  
For the sky a bow above it;  
White the space between for day-time,  
Filled with little stars for night-time;  
On the left a point for sunrise,  
On the right a point for sunset,  
On the top a point for noontide,  
And for rain and cloudy weather  
Waving lines descending from it.

65

Footprints pointing towards a wigwam  
Were a sign of invitation,  
Were a sign of guests assembling;      75  
Bloody hands with palms uplifted  
Were a symbol of destruction,  
Were a hostile sign and symbol.

All these things did Hiawatha  
Show unto his wondering people,  
And interpreted their meaning,  
And he said: "Behold, your grave-posts  
Have no mark, no sign, nor symbol.  
Go and paint them all with figures;  
Each one with its household symbol,      85  
With its own ancestral Totem;  
So that those who follow after  
**May distinguish them and know them."**

70

75

80

85

And they painted on the grave-posts  
On the graves yet unforgotten,  
Each his own ancestral 'totem,  
Each the symbol of his household;  
Figures of the Bear and Reindeer,  
Of the Turtle, Crane, and Beaver,  
Each inverted as a token  
That the owner was departed,  
That the chief who bore the symbol  
Lay beneath in dust and ashes.

90

95

And the Jossakeeds, the Prophets,  
The Wabenos, the Magicians,  
And the Medicine-men, the Medas,  
Painted upon bark and deer-skin  
Figures for the songs they chanted,  
For each song a separate symbol,  
Figures mystical and awful,  
Figures strange and brightly colored;  
And each figure had its meaning,  
Each some magic song suggested.

100

105

The Great Spirit, the Creator,  
Flashing light through all the heaven;  
The Great Serpent, the Kenabeek,  
With his bloody crest erected,  
Creeping, looking into heaven;

110

In the sky the sun, that glistens,  
And the moon eclipsed and dying; 115  
Owl and eagle, crane and hen-hawk,  
And the cormorant, bird of magic;  
Headless men, that walk the heavens,  
Bodies lying pierced with arrows,  
Bloody hands of death uplifted, 120  
Flags on graves, and great war-captains  
Grasping both the earth and heaven!

Such as these the shapes they painted  
On the birch-bark and the deer-skin;  
Songs of war and songs of hunting, 125  
Songs of medicine and of magic,  
All were written in these figures,  
For each figure had its meaning,  
Each its separate song recorded.

Nor forgotten was the Love-Song, 130  
The most subtle of all medicines,  
The most potent spell of magic,  
Dangerous more than war or hunting!  
Thus the Love-Song was recorded,  
Symbol and interpretation. 135

First a human figure standing,  
Painted in the brightest scarlet;  
'T is the lover, the musician,

170 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

And the meaning is, "My painting  
Makes me powerful over others."

140

Then the figure seated, singing,  
Playing on a drum of magic,  
And the interpretation, "Listen!  
'T is my voice you hear, my singing!"

Then the same red figure seated  
In the shelter of a wigwam,  
And the meaning of the symbol,  
"I will come and sit beside you  
In the mystery of my passion!"

145

Then two figures, man and woman, 150  
Standing hand in hand together  
With their hands so clasped together  
That they seem in one united,  
And the words thus represented  
Are, "I see your heart within you,  
And your cheeks are red with blushes!" 155

Next the maiden on an island,  
In the centre of an island;  
And the song this shape suggested  
Was, "Though you were at a distance, 160  
Were upon some far-off island,  
Such the spell I cast upon you,  
Such the magic power of passion,

I could straightway draw you to me!"

Then the figure of the maiden

165

Sleeping, and the lover near her,

Whispering to her in her slumbers,

Saying, "Though you were far from me

In the land of Sleep and Silence,

Still the voice of love would reach you!" 170

And the last of all the figures

Was a heart within a circle,

Drawn within a magic circle;

And the image had this meaning:

"Naked lies your heart before me,

175

To your naked heart I whisper!"

Thus it was that Hiawatha,

In his wisdom, taught the people

All the mysteries of painting,

All the art of Picture-Writing,

180

On the smooth bark of the birch-tree,

On the white skin of the reindeer,

On the grave-posts of the village.



“Danced the medicine-dance around him;  
And upstarting wild and haggard.”



## XV.

### HIAWATHA'S LAMENTATION.

N those days the Evil  
Spirits,  
All the Manitos of mis-  
chief,

Fearing Hiawatha's wisdom,  
And his love for Chibiabos,  
Jealous of their faithful friendship,  
And their noble words and actions,

5

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 73

Made at length a league against them,  
To molest them and destroy them.

Hiawatha, wise and wary,  
Often said to Chibiabos, 10  
“O my brother! do not leave me,  
Lest the Evil Spirits harm you!”  
Chibiabos, young and heedless,  
Laughing shook his coal-black tresses,  
Answered ever sweet and childlike, 15  
“Do not fear for me, O brother!  
Harm and evil come not near me!”

Once when Peboan, the Winter,  
Roofed with ice the Big-Sea-Water,  
When the snow-flakes, whirling downward, 20  
Hissed among the withered oak-leaves,  
Changed the pine-trees into wigwams,  
Covered all the earth with silence,—  
Armed with arrows, shod with snow-shoes,  
Heeding not his brother’s warning, 25  
Fearing not the Evil Spirits,  
Forth to hunt the deer with antlers  
All alone went Chibiabos.

Right across the Big-Sea-Water  
Sprang with speed the deer before him. 30  
With the wind and snow he followed,

O'er the treacherous ice he followed,  
Wild with all the fierce commotion  
And the rapture of the hunting.

But beneath, the Evil Spirits                            35  
Lay in ambush, waiting for him,  
Broke the treacherous ice beneath him,  
Dragged him downward to the bottom,  
Buried in the sand his body.

Unktahée, the god of water,  
He the god of the Dacotahs,  
Drowned him in the deep abysses  
Of the lake of Gitche Gumeé.

From the headlands Hiawatha  
Sent forth such a wail of anguish,                    45  
Such a fearful lamentation,  
That the bison paused to listen,  
And the wolves howled from the prairies,  
And the thunder in the distance  
Starting answered "Baim-wawa!"

Then his face with black he painted,  
With his robe his head he covered,  
In his wigwam sat lamenting,  
Seven long weeks he sat lamenting,  
Uttering still this moan of sorrow:—

"He is dead, the sweet musician!"                    55

He the sweetest of all singers!

He has gone from us forever,

He has moved a little nearer

To the Master of all music,

To the Master of all singing!

O my brother, Chibiabos!"

And the melancholy fir-trees

Waved their dark green fans above him,

Waved their purple cones above him, 65

Sighing with him to console him,

Mingling with his lamentation

Their complaining, their lamenting.

Came the Spring, and all the forest

Looked in vain for Chibiabos;

Sighed the rivulet, Sebowisha,

Sighed the rushes in the meadow.

From the tree-tops sang the bluebird,

Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,

"Chibiabos! Chibiabos!

He is dead, the sweet musician!"

From the wigwam sang the robin,

Sang the Opechee, the robin,

"Chibiabos! Chibiabos!

He is dead, the sweetest singer!"

And at night through all the forest

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80

Went the whippoorwill complaining,  
Wailing went the Wawonaissa,  
"Chibiabos! Chibiabos!"

He is dead, the sweet musician!  
He the sweetest of all singers!"

85

Then the medicine-men, the Medas,

## The magicians, the Wabenos,

And the Jossakeeds, the prophets,

## Came to visit Hiawatha;

Built a Sacred Lodge beside him,

To appease him, to console him,

Walked in silent, grave procession,

Bearing each a pouch of healing.

### Skin of beaver, lynx, or otter,

Filled with magic roots and simples.

Filled with very potent medicines.

95

When he heard their steps approaching,

Hiawatha ceased lamenting,

Called no more on Chibabos;

100

Naught he questioned, naught he answered.

But his mournful head uncovered,

From his face the mourning colors

Washed he slowly and in silence,

Slowly and in silence followed

## Onward to the Sacred Wigwam

105

There a magic drink they gave him,  
Made of Nahma-wusk, the spearmint,  
And Wabeno-wusk, the yarrow,  
Roots of power, and herbs of healing;      110  
Beat their drums, and shook their rattles;  
Chanted singly and in chorus,  
Mystic songs, like these, they chanted.

"I myself, myself! behold me!  
'T is the great Gray Eagle talking;      115  
Come, ye white crows, come and hear him!  
The loud-speaking thunder helps me;  
All the unseen spirits help me:  
I can hear their voices calling,  
All around the sky I hear them!      120  
I can blow you strong, my brother,  
I can heal you, Hiawatha!"

"Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus,  
"Way-ha-way!" the mystic chorus.

"Friends of mine are all the serpents!      125  
Hear me shake my skin of hen-hawk!  
Mahng, the white loon, I can kill him,  
I can shoot your heart and kill it!  
I can blow you strong, my brother,  
I can heal you, Hiawatha!"      130

"Hi-au-ha!" replied the chorus.

“Way-ha-way!” the mystic chorus.  
 “I myself, myself! the prophet!  
 When I speak the wigwam trembles,  
 Shakes the Sacred Lodge with terror,      135  
 Hands unseen begin to shake it!  
 When I walk, the sky I tread on  
 Bends and makes a noise beneath me!  
 I can blow you strong, my brother!  
 Rise and speak, O Hiawatha!”      140

“Hi-au-ha!” replied the chorus,  
 “Way-ha-way!” the mystic chorus.  
 Then they shook their medicine-pouches  
 O'er the head of Hiawatha,  
 Danced their medicine-dance around him; 145  
 And upstarting wild and haggard,  
 Like a man from dreams awakened,  
 He was healed of all his madness.  
 As the clouds are swept from heaven,  
 Straightway from his brain departed      150  
 All his moody melancholy;  
 As the ice is swept from rivers,  
 Straightway from his heart departed  
 All his sorrow and affliction.

Then they summoned Chibiabos      155  
 From his grave beneath the waters.

From the sands of Gitche Gumee  
Summoned Hiawatha's brother.

And so mighty was the magic  
Of that cry and invocation,  
That he heard it as he lay there  
Underneath the Big-Sea-Water;  
From the sand he rose and listened,  
Heard the music and the singing,  
Came, obedient to the summons,  
To the doorway of the wigwam,  
But to enter they forbade him.

Through a chink a coal they gave him,  
Through the door a burning fire-brand;

Ruler in the Land of Spirits,  
Ruler o'er the dead, they made him,  
Telling him a fire to kindle  
For all those that died thereafter,  
Camp-fires for their night encampments

On their solitary journey  
To the kingdom of Ponemah,  
To the land of the Hereafter.

From the village of his childhood,  
From the homes of those who knew him,  
Passing silent through the forest,  
Like a smoke-wreath wafted sideways.

Slowly vanished Chibiabos!  
 Where he passed, the branches moved not,  
 Where he trod, the grasses bent not,  
 And the fallen leaves of last year      185  
 Made no sound beneath his footsteps.

Four whole days he journeyed onward  
 Down the pathway of the dead men;  
 On the dead man's strawberry feasted,  
 Crossed the melancholy river,      190  
 On the swinging log he crossed it,—  
 Came unto the Lake of Silver,  
 In the Stone Canoe was carried  
 To the Islands of the Blessed,  
 To the land of ghosts and shadows.      195

On that journey, moving slowly,  
 Many weary spirits saw he,  
 Panting under heavy burdens,  
 Laden with war-clubs, bows and arrows,  
 Robes of fur, and pots and kettles,      200  
 And with food that friends had given  
 For that solitary journey.

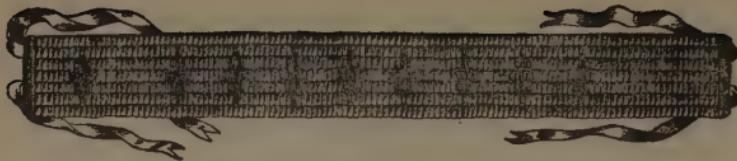
"Ay! why do the living," said they,  
 "Lay such heavy burdens on us!  
 Better were it to go naked,      205  
 Better were it to go fasting

Than to bear such heavy burdens  
On our long and weary journey!"

Forth then issued Hiawatha,  
Wandered eastward, wandered westward, 216  
Teaching men the use of simples  
And the antidotes for poisons,  
And the cure of all diseases.  
Thus was first made known to mortals  
All the mystery of Medamin, 215  
All the sacred art of healing.



**Basket Used by the Pawnee Indians for Carrying  
Corn or Berries.**



"With the sacred belt of Wampum."



## XVI.

### PAU-PUK-KEEWIS.

OU shall hear how Pan-  
Puk-Keewis,  
He, the handsome Yena-  
dizze,  
Whom the people called the  
Storm Fool,

Vexed the village with disturbance;  
You shall hear of all his mischief,  
And his flight from Hiawatha,  
And his wondrous transmigrations,  
And the end of his adventures.

On the shores of Gitche Gumee,  
On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo,  
By the shinaing Big-Sea-Water

5

10

Stood the lodge of Pau-Puk-Keewis.  
It was he who in his frenzy  
Whirled these drifting sands together,  
On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo,      15  
When, among the guests assembled,  
He so merrily and madly  
Danced at Hiawatha's wedding,  
Danced the Beggar's Dance to please them.

Now, in search of new adventures,      20  
From his lodge went Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Came with speed into the village,  
Found the young men all assembled  
In the lodge of old Iagoo,  
Listening to his monstrous stories,      25  
To his wonderful adventures.

He was telling them the story  
Of Ojeeg, the Summer-Maker,  
How he made a hole in heaven,  
How he climbed up into heaven,      30  
And let out the summer-weather,  
The perpetual, pleasant Summer;  
How the Otter first essayed it;  
How the Beaver, Lynx, and Badger  
Tried in turn the great achievement,      35

From the summit of the mountain  
 Smote their fists against the heavens,  
 Smote against the sky their foreheads,  
 Cracked the sky, but could not break it;  
 How the Wolverine, uprising,                          40  
 Made him ready for the encounter,  
 Bent his knees down, like a squirrel,  
 Drew his arms back, like a cricket.

“Once he leaped,” said old Iagoo,  
 “Once he leaped, and lo! above him                  45  
 Bent the sky, as ice in rivers  
 When the waters rise beneath it;  
 Twice he leaped, and lo! above him  
 Cracked the sky, as ice in rivers  
 When the freshet is at highest!  
 Thrice he leaped, and lo! above him                  50  
 Broke the shattered sky asunder,  
 And he disappeared within it,  
 And Ojeeq, the Fisher Weasel,  
 With a bound went in behind him!”

“Hark you!” shouted Pau-Puk-Keewis  
 As he entered at the doorway;  
 “I am tired of all this talking,  
 Tired of old Iagoo’s stories,

Tired of Hiawatha's wisdom. 60

Here is something to amuse you,  
Better than this endless talking."

Then from out his pouch of wolf-skin  
Forth he drew, with solemn manner,  
All the game of Bowl and Counters, 65  
Pugasaing, with thirteen pieces.  
White on one side were they painted,  
And vermillion on the other;  
Two Kenabeeks or great serpents,  
Two Ininewug or wedge-men, 70  
One great war-club, Pugamaugun,  
And one slender fish, the Keego,  
Four round pieces, Ozawabeeks,  
And three Sheshebwug or ducklings.  
All were made of bone and painted,  
All except the Ozawabeeks; 75  
These were brass, on one side burnished,  
And were black upon the other.

In a wooden bowl he placed them,  
Shook and jostled them together, 80  
Threw them on the ground before him,  
Thus exclaiming and explaining:  
"Red side up are all the pieces,

And one great Kenabeek standing  
 On the bright side of a brass piece,  
 On a burnished Ozawabeek;  
 Thirteen tens and eight are counted.”

85

Then again he shook the pieces,  
 Shook and jostled them together,  
 Threw them on the ground before him,      90  
 Still exclaiming and explaining:  
 “White are both the great Kenabeeks,  
 White the Ininewug, the wedge-men,  
 Red are all the other pieces;  
 Five tens and an eight are counted.”      95

Thus he taught the game of hazard,  
 Thus displayed it and explained it,  
 Running through its various chances,  
 Various changes, various meanings:  
 Twenty curious eyes stared at him,  
 Full of eagerness stared at him.

100

“Many games,” said old Iagoo,  
 “Many games of skill and hazard  
 Have I seen in different nations,  
 Have I played in different countries.      105  
 He who plays with old Iagoo  
 Must have very nimble fingers;

Though you think yourself so skilful  
I can beat you, Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
I can even give you lessons  
In your game of Bowl and Counters!"

110

So they sat and played together,  
All the old men and the young men,  
Played for dresses, weapons, wampum,  
Played till midnight, played till morning, 115  
Played until the Yenadizze,  
Till the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Of their treasures had despoiled them,  
Of the best of all their dresses,  
Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine, 120  
Belts of wampum, crests of feathers,  
Warlike weapons, pipes and pouches.  
Twenty eyes glared wildly at him,  
Like the eyes of wolves glared at him.

120

Said the lucky Pau-Puk-Keewis: 125  
"In my wigwam I am lonely,  
In my wanderings and adventures  
I have need of a companion,  
Fain would have a Meshinauwa,  
An attendant and pipe-bearer. 130  
I will venture all these winnings,

All these garments heaped about me,  
All this wampum, all these feathers,  
On a single throw will venture

All against the young man yonder!"

135

"T was a youth of sixteen summers,  
"T was a nephew of Iagoo;

Face-in-a-Mist, the people called him.

As the fire burns in a pipe-head  
Dusky red beneath the ashes,

140

So beneath his shaggy eyebrows  
Glowed the eyes of old Iagoo.

"Ugh!" he answered very fiercely;  
"Ugh!" they answered all and each one.

Seized the wooden bowl the old man,

145

Closely in his bony fingers

Clutched the fatal bowl, Onagon,

Shook it fiercely and with fury,

Made the pieces ring together

As he threw them down before him.

150

Red were both the great Kenabeeks,

Red the Ininewug, the wedge-men,

Red the Sheshebwug, the ducklings,

Black the four brass Ozawabeeks,

White alone the fish, the Keego;

155

Only five the pieces counted!

Then the smiling Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Shook the bowl and threw the pieces;  
Lightly in the air he tossed them,  
And they fell about him scattered;  
Dark and bright the Ozawabeeks,  
Red and white the other pieces,  
And upright among the others  
One Ininewug was standing,  
Even as crafty Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Stood alone among the players,  
Saying, "Five tens! mine the game is!"

160

165

Twenty eyes glared at him fiercely,  
Like the eyes of wolves glared at him,  
As he turned and left the wigwam,  
Followed by his Meshinauwa,  
By the nephew of Iagoo,  
By the tall and graceful stripling,  
Bearing in his arms the winnings,  
Shirts of deer-skin, robes of ermine,  
Belts of wampum, pipes and weapons.

170

175

"Carry them," said Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Pointing with his fan of feathers,  
"To my wigwam far to eastward,

## 190 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

On the dunes of Nagow Wudjoo!" 180  
Hot and red with smoke and gambling  
Were the eyes of Pau-Puk-Keewis  
As he came forth to the freshness  
Of the pleasant Summer morning.  
All the birds were singing gayly, 185  
All the streamlets flowing swiftly,  
And the heart of Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Sang with pleasure as the birds sing,  
Beat with triumph like the streamlets,  
As he wandered through the village, 190  
In the early gray of morning,  
With his fan of turkey-feathers,  
With his plumes and tufts of swan's down,  
Till he reached the farthest wigwam,  
Reached the lodge of Hiawatha. 195

Silent was it and deserted;  
No one met him at the doorway,  
No one came to bid him welcome;  
But the birds were singing round it,  
In and out and round the doorway, 200  
Hopping, singing, fluttering, feeding,  
And aloft upon the ridge-pole  
Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens.

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA. 191

Sat with fiery eyes, and, screaming,  
Flapped his wings at Pau-Puk-Keewis. 205

"All are gone! the lodge is empty!"  
Thus it was spake Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
In his heart resolving mischief;—  
"Gone is wary Hiawatha,  
Gone the silly Laughing Water,  
Gone Nokomis, the old woman,  
And the lodge is left unguarded!"

By the neck he seized the raven,  
Whirled it round him like a rattle,  
Like a medicine-pouch he shook it,  
Strangled Kahgahgee, the raven,  
From the ridge-pole of the wigwam  
Left its lifeless body hanging,  
As an insult to its master,  
As a taunt to Hiawatha. 215

With a stealthy step he entered,  
Round the lodge in wild disorder  
Threw the household things about him,  
Piled together in confusion  
Bowls of wood and earthen kettles,  
Robes of buffalo and beaver,  
Skins of otter, lynx, and ermine. 225

As an insult to Nokomis,  
As a taunt to Minnehaha.

Then departed Pau-Puk-Keewis,      230  
Whistling, singing through the forest,  
Whistling gayly to the squirrels,  
Who from hollow boughs above him  
Dropped their acorn-shells upon him,  
Singing gayly to the wood-birds,      235  
Who from out the leafy darkness  
Answered with a song as merry.

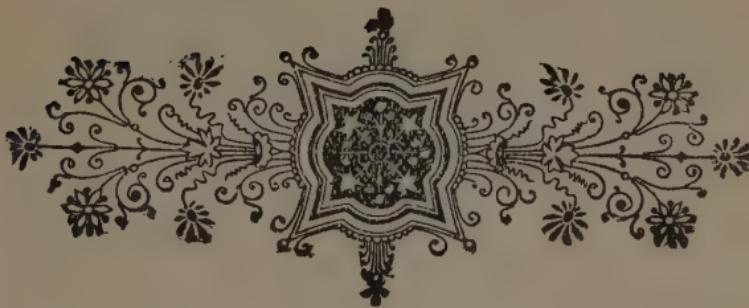
Then he climbed the rocky headlands  
Looking o'er the Gitche Gumee,  
Perched himself upon their summit,      240  
Waiting full of mirth and mischief  
The return of Hiawatha.

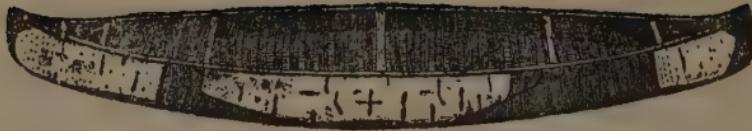
Stretched upon his back he lay there;  
Far below him plashed the waters,  
Plashed and washed the dreamy waters;      245  
Far above him swam the heavens,  
Swam the dizzy, dreamy heavens;  
Round him hovered, fluttered, rustled,  
Hiawatha's mountain chickens,  
Flock-wise swept and wheeled about him,      250  
Almost brushed him with their pinions.

And he killed them as he lay there,  
Slaughtered them by tens and twenties,  
Threw their bodies down the headland,  
Threw them on the beach below him.  
Till at length Kayoshk, the sea-gull,  
Perched upon a crag above them,  
Shouted: "It is Pau-Puk-Keewis!  
He is slaying us by hundreds!  
Send a message to our brother,  
Tidings send to Hiawatha!"

255

260





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## XVII.



### THE HUNTING OF PAU-PUK-KEEWIS.

ULL of wrath was  
Hiawatha  
When he came into  
the village,

Found the people in confusion,  
Heard of all the misdemeanors  
All the malice and the mischief,  
Of the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis.

Hard his breath came through his nostrils  
Through his teeth he buzzed and muttered  
Words of anger and resentment,  
Hot and humming like a hornet  
“I will slay this Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Slay this mischief-maker!” said he.

"Not so long and wide the world is,  
Not so rude and rough the way is,  
That my wrath shall not attain him,  
That my vengeance shall not reach him!"

15

Then in swift pursuit departed  
Hiawatha and the hunters  
On the trail of Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Through the forest, where he passed it, 20  
To the headlands where he rested;  
But they found not Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Only in the trampled grasses,  
In the whortleberry-bushes,  
Found the couch where he had rested, 25  
Found the impress of his body.

From the lowlands far beneath them,  
From the Muskoday, the meadow,  
Pau-Puk-Keewis, turning backward,  
Mad a gesture of defiance, 30  
Made a gesture of derision;  
And aloud cried Hiawatha,  
From the summit of the mountains:  
"Not so long and wide the world is,  
Not so rude and rough the way is,  
But my wrath shall overtake you,  
And my vengeance shall attain you!"

35

Over rock and over river,  
 Through the bush, and brake, and forest,  
 Ran the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis;      40  
 Like an antelope he bounded,  
 Till he came unto a streamlet  
 In the middle of the forest,  
 To a streamlet still and tranquil,  
 That had overflowed its margin,      45  
 To a dam made by the beavers,  
 To a pond of quiet water,  
 Where knee-deep the trees were standing.  
 Where the water-lilies floated,  
 Where the rushes waved and whispered.      50

On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
 On the dam of trunks and branches,  
 Through whose chinks the water spouted,  
 O'er whose summit flowed the streamlet.  
 From the bottom rose the beaver,      55  
 Looked with two great eyes of wonder,  
 Eyes that seemed to ask a question,  
 At the stranger, Pau-Puk-Keewis.

On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
 O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet,      60  
 Flowed the bright and silvery water,  
 And he spake unto the beaver,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

79

With a smile he spake in this wise:

"O my friend Ahm'ak, the beaver,  
Cool and pleasant is the water;  
Let me dive into the water,  
Let me rest there in your lodges;  
Change me, too, into a beaver!"

75

Cautiously replied the beaver,  
With reserve he thus made answer:

80

"Let me first consult the others,  
Let me ask the other beavers."

Down he sank into the water,  
Heavily sank he, as a stone sinks,  
Down among the leaves and branches,  
Brown and matted at the bottom.

75

On the dam stood Pau-Puk-Keewin,  
O'er his ankles flowed the streamlet,  
Spouted through the chinks below him,  
Dashed upon the stones beneath him,  
Spread serene and calm before him,  
And the sunshine and the shadows  
Fell in flecks and gleams upon him,  
Fell in little shining patches,  
Through the waving, rustling branches.

80

From the bottom rose the beavers,  
Silently above the surface

85

Rose one head and then another,  
Till the pond seemed full of beavers,  
Full of black and shining faces.

62

To the beavers Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Spake entreating, said in this wise:  
“Very pleasant is your dwelling,  
O my friends! and safe from danger;  
Can you not with all your cunning,  
All your wisdom and contrivance,  
Change me, too, into a beaver?”

“Yes!” replied Ahmeek, the beaver,  
He the King of all the beavers,  
“Let yourself slide down among us,  
Down into the tranquil water.”

103

Down into the pond among them  
Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis;  
Black became his shirt of deer-skin,  
Black his moccasins and leggins,  
In a broad black tail behind him  
Spread his fox-tails and his fringes;  
He was changed into a beaver.

M. A. T.

“Make me large,” said Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
“Make me large and make me larger,  
Larger than the other beavers.”

114

“Yes,” the beaver chief responded,

"When our lodge below you enter,  
In our wigwam we will make you  
Ten times larger than the others."

115

Thus into the clear brown water  
Silently sank Pau-Puk-Keewis;  
Found the bottom covered over  
With the trunks of trees and branches,  
Hoards of food against the winter,  
Piles and heaps against the famine,  
Found the lodge with arching doorway,  
Leading into spacious chambers.

120

Here they made him large and larger,  
Made him largest of the beavers,  
Ten times larger than the others.  
"You shall be our ruler," said they;  
"Chief and king of all the beavers."

125

But not long had Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Sat in state among the beavers,  
When there came a voice of warning  
From the watchman at his station  
In the water-flags and lilies,  
Saying, "Here is Hiawatha!  
Hiawatha with his hunters!"

130

Then they heard a cry above them,  
Heard a shouting and a tramping,

135

Heard a crashing and a rushing,  
And the water round and o'er them  
Sank and sucked away in eddies,      140  
And they knew their dam was broken.

On the lodge's roof the hunters  
Leaped, and broke it all asunder;  
Streamed the sunshine through the crevice,  
Sprang the beavers through the doorway, 145  
Hid themselves in deeper water,  
In the channel of the streamlet;  
But the mighty Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Could not pass beneath the doorway;  
He was puffed with pride and feeding,    150  
He was swollen like a bladder.

Through the roof looked Hiawatha,  
Cried aloud, "O Pau-Puk-Keewis!  
Vain are all your craft and cunning,  
Vain your manifold disguises!      155  
Well I know you, Pau-Puk-Keewis!"  
With their clubs they beat and bruised him,  
Beat to death poor Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Pounded him as maize is pounded,  
Till his skull was crushed to pieces.    160

Six tall hunters, lithe and limber,

Bore him home on poles and branches,  
Bore the body of the beaver;  
But the ghost, the Jeebi in him,  
Thought and felt as Pau-Puk-Keewis,      165  
Still lived on as Pau-Puk-Keewis.

And it fluttered, strove, and struggled,  
Waving hither, waving thither,  
As the curtains of a wigwam  
Struggle with their thongs of deer-skin,      170  
When the wintry wind is blowing;  
Till it drew itself together,  
Till it rose up from the body,  
Till it took the form and features  
Of the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis      175  
Vanishing into the forest.

But the wary Hiawatha  
Saw the figure ere it vanished,  
Saw the form of Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Glide into the soft blue shadow      180  
Of the pine-trees of the forest;  
Toward the squares of white beyond it,  
Toward an opening in the forest,  
Like a wind it rushed and panted,  
Bending all the booughs before it,      185

And behind it, as the rain comes,  
Came the steps of Hiawatha.

To a lake with many islands  
Came the breathless Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Where among the water-lilies                          190  
Pishnekuh, the brant, were sailing;  
Through the tufts of rushes floating,  
Steering through the reedy islands.  
Now their broad black beaks they lifted,  
Now they plunged beneath the water,                          195  
Now they darkened in the shadow,  
Now they brightened in the sunshine.

“Pishnekuh!” cried Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
“Pishnekuh! my brothers!” said he,  
“Change me to a brant with plumage,                          200  
With a shining neck and feathers,  
Make me large, and make me larger,  
Ten times larger than the others.”

Straightway to a brant they changed him,  
With two huge and dusky pinions,                          205  
With a bosom smooth and rounded,  
With a bill like two great paddles,  
Made him larger than the others,  
Ten times larger than the largest,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

203

Just as shouting from the forest,  
On the shore stood Hiawatha.

210

Up they rose with cry and clamor,  
With a whirr and beat of pinions,  
Rose up from the reedy islands,  
From the water-flags and lilies.

215

And they said to Pau-Puk-Keewis:  
“In your flying, look not downward,  
Take good heed, and look not downward,  
Lest some strange mischance should happen,  
Lest some great mishap befall you!”

220

Fast and far they fled to northward,  
Fast and far through mist and sunshine,  
Fed among the moors and fen-lands,  
Slept among the reeds and rushes.

On the morrow as they journeyed,  
Buoyed and lifted by the South-wind,  
Wafted onward by the South-wind,  
Blowing fresh and strong behind them,  
Rose a sound of human voices,  
Rose a clamor from beneath them,  
From the lodges of a village,  
From the people miles beneath them.

225

230

For the people of the village

Saw the flock of brant with wonder,  
Saw the wings of Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Flapping far up in the ether,  
Broader than two doorway curtains.

Pau-Puk-Keewis heard the shouting,  
Knew the voice of Hiawatha,  
Knew the outcry of Iagoo,                  235  
And, forgetful of the warning,  
Drew his neck in, and looked downward,  
And the wind that blew behind him  
Caught his mighty fan of feathers,  
Sent him wheeling, whirling downward! 245

All in vain did Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Struggle to regain his balance!  
Whirling round and round and downward,  
He beheld in turn the village  
And in turn the flock above him,                  250  
Saw the village coming nearer,  
And the flock receding farther,  
Heard the voices growing louder,  
Heard the shouting and the laughter;  
Saw no more the flock above him,                  255  
Only saw the earth beneath him;  
Dead out of the empty heaven.

Dead among the shouting people,  
With a heavy sound and sullen,  
Fell the brant with broken pinions. 260

But his soul, his ghost, his shadow,  
Still survived as Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Took again the form and features  
Of the handsome Yenadizze,  
And again went rushing onward, 265  
Followed fast by Hiawatha,  
Crying: "Not so wide the world is,  
Not so long and rough the way is,  
But my wrath shall overtake you,  
But my vengeance shall attain you!" 270

And so near he came, so near him,  
That his hand was stretched to seize him,  
His right hand to seize and hold him,  
When the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Whirled and spun about in circles, 275  
Fanned the air into a whirlwind,  
Danced the dust and leaves about him,  
And amid the whirling eddies  
Sprang into a hollow oak-tree,  
Changed himself into a serpent, 280  
Gliding out through root and rubbish.

206 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

- With his right hand Hiawatha  
Smote amain the hollow oak-tree,  
Rent it into shreds and splinters,  
Left it lying there in fragments. 285
- But in vain; for Pau-Puk-Keewis  
Once again in human figure,  
Full in sight ran on before him,  
Sped away in gust and whirlwind,  
On the shores of Gitche Gumee, 290  
Westward by the Big-Sea-Water,  
Came unto the rocky headlands,  
To the Pictured Rocks of sandstone,  
Looking over lake and landscape.
- And the Old Man of the Mountain, 295  
He the Manito of Mountains,  
Opened wide his rocky doorways,  
Opened wide his deep abysses,  
Giving Pau-Puk-Keewis shelter  
In his caverns dark and dreary, 300  
Bidding Pau-Puk-Keewis welcome  
To his gloomy lodge of sandstone.
- There without stood Hiawatha,  
Found the doorways closed against him  
With his mittens, Minjekahwun, 305

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

207

Smote great caverns in the sandstone,  
Cried aloud in tones of thunder,  
“Open! I am Hiawatha!”

But the Old Man of the Mountain  
Opened not, and made no answer  
From the silent crags of sandstone,  
From the gloomy rock abysses.

Then he raised his hands to heaven,  
Called imploring on the tempest,  
Called Waywassimo, the lightning,      310  
And the thunder, Annemeekie;  
And they came with night and darkness,  
Sweeping down the Big-Sea-Water  
From the distant Thunder Mountains;  
And the trembling Pau-Puk-Keewis      320  
Heard the footsteps of the thunder,  
Saw the red eyes of the lightning,  
Was afraid, and crouched and trembled.

Then Waywassimo, the lightning,  
Smote the doorways of the caverns,      325  
With his war-club smote the doorways,  
Smote the jutting crags of sandstone.  
And the thunder, Annemeekie,  
Shouted down into the caverns,

Saying, "Where is Pau-Puk-Keewis!"  
And the crags fell, and beneath them  
Dead among the rocky ruins  
Lay the cunning Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Lay the handsome Yenadizze,  
Slain in his own human figure.

330

Ended were his wild adventures,  
Ended were his tricks and gambols,  
Ended all his craft and cunning,  
Ended all his mischief-making,  
All his gambling and his dancing,  
All his wooing of the maidens.

335

Then the noble Hiawatha  
Took his soul, his ghost, his shadow,  
Spake and said: "O Pau-Puk-Keewis,  
Never more in human figure  
Shall you search for new adventures;  
Never more with jest and laughter  
Dance the dust and leaves in whirlwinds;  
But above there in the heavens  
You shall soar and sail in circles;  
I will change you to an eagle,  
To Keneu, the great war-eagle,  
Chief of all the fowls with feathers,

340

345

350

**Chief of Hiawatha's chickens."**

And the name of Pau-Puk-Keewis 355  
 Lingers still among the people,  
 Lingers still among the singers,  
 And among the story-tellers;  
 And in Winter, when the snow-flakes  
 Whirl in eddies round the lodges, 360  
 When the wind in gusty tumult  
 O'er the smoke-flue pipes and whistles,  
 "There," they cry, "comes Pau-Puk-Keewis;  
 He is dancing through the village,  
 He is gathering in his harvest!" 365





## XVIII.

### THE DEATH OF KWASIND.

AR and wide among  
the nations  
Spread the name and  
fame of Kwa-  
sind;

No man dared to strive with Kwasind,  
No man could compete with Kwasind.

But the mischievous Puk-Wudjies,

5

They the envious Little People,

They the fairies and the pygmies,

Plotted and conspired against him.

"If this hateful Kwasind," said they,

"If this great, outrageous fellow

10

Goes on thus a little longer,  
Tearing everything he touches,  
Rending everything to pieces,  
Filling all the world with wonder,  
What becomes of the Puk-Wudjies?      15  
Who will care for the Puk-Wudjies?  
He will tread us down like mushrooms  
Drive us all into the water,  
Give our bodies to be eaten  
By the wicked Nee-ba-naw-baigs,  
By the Spirits of the water!"      20

So the angry Little People  
All conspired against the Strong Man,  
All conspired to murder Kwasind,  
Yes, to rid the world of Kwasind,  
The audacious, overbearing,  
Heartless, haughty, dangerous Kwasind!

Now this wondrous strength of Kwasind  
In his crown alone was seated;  
In his crown too was his weakness;      30  
There alone could he be wounded,  
Nowhere else could weapon pierce him,  
Nowhere else could weapon harm him.

Even there the only weapon  
That could wound him, that could slay him, 35

Was the seed-cone of the pine-tree,  
 Was the blue cone of the fir-tree.  
 This was Kwasind's fatal secret,  
 Known to no man among mortals;  
 But the cunning Little People,  
 The Puk-Wudjies, knew the secret,  
 Knew the only way to kill him.

40

So they gathered cones together,  
 Gathered seed-cones of the pine-tree,  
 Gathered blue cones of the fir-tree,  
 In the woods by Taquamenaw,  
 Brought them to the river's margin,  
 Heaped them in great piles together,  
 Where the red rocks from the margin  
 Jutting overhang the river.  
 There they lay in wait for Kwasind,  
 The malicious Little People.

45

'T was an afternoon in Summer;  
 Very hot and still the air was,  
 Very smooth the gliding river,  
 Motionless the sleeping shadows:  
 Insects glistened in the sunshine,  
 Insects skated on the water,  
 Filled the drowsy air with buzzing,  
 With a far-resounding war-cry.

50

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60

Down the river came the Strong Man,  
In his birch canoe came Kwasind.  
Floating slowly down the current  
Of the sluggish Taquamenaw,  
Very languid with the weather,  
Very sleepy with the silence. 65

From the overhanging branches,  
From the tassels of the birch-trees,  
Soft the Spirit of Sleep descended;  
By his airy hosts surrounded,  
His invisible attendants,  
Came the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin;  
Like the burnished Dur-kwo-ne-she,  
Like a dragon fly, he hovered  
O'er the drowsy head of Kwasind. 75

To his ear there came a murmur  
As of waves upon a sea-shore,  
As of far-off tumbling waters,  
As of winds among the pine-trees;  
And he felt upon his forehead  
Blows of little airy war-clubs,  
Wielded by the slumbrous legions  
Of the Spirit of Sleep, Nepahwin,  
As of some one breathing on him. 80

At the first blow of their war-clubs, 85

Fell a drowsiness on Kwasind;  
At the second blow they smote him,  
Motionless his paddle rested;  
At the third, before his vision  
Reeled the landscape into darkness,      93  
Very sound asleep was Kwasind.

So he floated down the river,  
Like a blind man seated upright,  
Floated down the Taquamenaw,  
Underneath the trembling birch-trees,      95  
Underneath the wooded headlands,  
Underneath the war encampment  
Of the pygmies, the Puk-Wudjies.

There they stood, all armed and waiting,  
Hurled the pine-cones down upon him,      101  
Struck him on his brawny shoulders,  
On his crown defenseless struck him.  
“Death to Kwasind!” was the sudden  
War-cry of the Little People.

And he sideways swayed and tumbled,      105  
Sideways fell into the river,  
Plunged beneath the sluggish water  
Headlong, as an otter plunges;  
And the birch canoe, abandoned,  
Drifted empty down the river,      110

Bottom upward swerved and drifted:  
Nothing more was seen of Kwasind.

But the memory of the Strong Man  
Lingered long among the people,  
And whenever through the forest      215  
Raged and roared the wintry tempest,  
And the branches, tossed and troubled,  
Creaked and groaned and split asunder,  
“Kwasind!” cried they; “that is Kwasind!  
He is gathering in his fire-wood!”      220





*Strings of Black and White Wampum Shells.*



## XIX.

### THE GHOSTS.

EVER stoops the soaring vulture  
On his quarry in the desert,  
On the sick or wounded bison,  
But another vulture, watching

From his high aerial look-out,  
Sees the downward plunge, and follows;  
And a third pursues the second,  
Coming from the invisible ether,  
First a speck, and then a vulture,  
Till the air is dark with pinions.

5

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So disasters come not singly;  
But as if they watched and waited,  
Scanning one another's motions,  
When the first descends, the others  
Follow, follow, gathering flock-wise      15  
Round their victim, sick and wounded,  
First a shadow, then a sorrow,  
Till the air is dark with anguish.

Now, o'er all the dreary Northland,  
Mighty Peboan, the Winter,      20  
Breathing on the lakes and rivers,  
Into stone had changed their waters.  
From his hair he shook the snow-flakes,  
Till the plains were strewn with whiteness,  
One uninterrupted level,      25  
As if, stooping, the Creator  
With his hand had smoothed them over.

Through the forest, wide and wailing,  
Roamed the hunter on his snow-shoes;  
In the village worked the women,      30  
Pounded maize, or dressed the deer-skin;  
And the young men played together  
On the ice the noisy ball-play,  
On the plain the dance of snow-shoes.

One dark evening, after sundown,      35

218 THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

In her wigwam Laughing Water  
Sat with old Nokomis, waiting  
For the steps of Hiawatha  
Homeward from the hunt returning.

On their faces gleamed the fire-light, 40  
Painting them with streaks of crimson,  
In the eyes of old Nokomis  
Glimmered like the watery moonlight,  
In the eyes of Laughing Water  
Glistened like the sun in water; 45  
And behind them crouched their shadows  
In the corners of the wigwam,  
And the smoke in wreaths above them  
Climbed and crowded through the smoke-flue.

Then the curtain of the doorway 50  
From without was slowly lifted;  
Brighter glowed the fire a moment,  
And a moment swerved the smoke-wreath,  
As two women entered softly,  
Passed the doorway uninvited, 55  
Without word of salutation,  
Without sign of recognition,  
Sat down in the farthest corner,  
Crouching low among the shadows.

From their aspect and their garments, 60

Strangers seemed they in the village;  
Very pale and haggard were they,  
As they sat there sad and silent,  
Trembling, cowering with the shadows.

Was it the wind above the smoke-flue, 65  
Muttering down into the wigwam?  
Was it the owl, the Koko-koho,  
Hooting from the dismal forest?  
Sure a voice said in the silence:  
“These are corpses clad in garments, 70  
These are ghosts that come to haunt you,  
From the kingdom of Ponemah,  
From the land of the Hereafter!”

Homeward now came Hiawatha  
From his hunting in the forest, 75  
With the snow upon his tresses,  
And the red deer on his shoulders.  
At the feet of Laughing Water  
Down he threw his lifeless burden;  
Nobler, handsomer she thought him, 80  
Than when first he came to woo her,  
First threw down the deer before her,  
As a token of his wishes,  
As a promise of the future.

Then he turned and saw the strangers, 85

Cowering, crouching with the shadows;  
Said within himself, "Who are they?  
What strange guests has Minnehaha?"  
But he questioned not the strangers,  
Only spake to bid them welcome  
To his lodge, his food, his fireside.

When the evening meal was ready,  
And the deer had been divided,  
Both the pallid guests, the strangers,  
Springing from among the shadows, 95  
Seized upon the choicest portions,  
Seized the white fat of the roebuck,  
Set apart for Laughing Water,  
For the wife of Hiawatha;  
Without asking, without thanking, 100  
Eagerly devoured the morsels,  
Flitted back among the shadows  
In the corner of the wigwam.

Not a word spake Hiawatha,  
Not a motion made Nokomis, 105  
Not a gesture Laughing Water;  
Not a change came o'er their features;  
Only Minnehaha softly  
Whispered, saying, "They are famished;  
Let them do what best delights them; 110

Let them eat, for they are famished."

Many a daylight dawned and darkened,  
Many a night shook off the daylight  
As the pine shakes off the snow-flakes  
From the midnight of its branches;      115  
Day by day the guests unmoving  
Sat there silent in the wigwam;  
But by night, in storm or starlight,  
Forth they went into the forest,  
Bringing fire-wood to the wigwam,      120  
Bringing pine-cones for the burning,  
Always sad and always silent

And whenever Hiawatha  
Came from fishing or from hunting,  
When the evening meal was ready,      125  
And the food had been divided,  
Gliding from their darksome corner,  
Came the pallid guests, the strangers,  
Seized upon the choicest portions  
Set aside for Laughing Water,  
And without rebuke or question      130  
Flitted back among the shadows.

Never once had Hiawatha  
By a word or look reproved them;  
Never once had old Nokomis      135

Made a gesture of impatience;  
Never once had Laughing Water  
Shown resentment at the outrage.  
All had they endured in silence,  
That the rights of guest and stranger,      14.  
That the virtue of free-giving,  
By a look might not be lessened,  
By a word might not be broken.

Once at midnight Hiawatha,  
Ever wakeful, ever watchful,      145  
In the wigwam, dimly lighted  
By the brands that still were burning,  
By the glimmering, flickering fire-light,  
Heard a sighing, oft repeated,  
Heard a sobbing as of sorrow.      150

From his couch rose Hiawatha,  
From his shaggy hides of bison,  
Pushed aside the deer-skin curtain,  
Saw the pallid guests, the shadows,  
Sitting upright on their couches,      155  
Weeping in the silent midnight.

And he said: "O guests! why is it  
That your hearts are so afflicted,  
That you sob so in the midnight?  
Has perchance the old Nokomis,      160

**H**as my wife, my Minnehaha,  
Wronged or grieved you by unkindness,  
Failed in hospitable duties?"



Then the shadows ceased from weeping,  
Ceased from sobbing and lamenting,      165  
And they said, with gentle voices:  
"We are ghosts of the departed,

Souls of those who once were with you.  
 From the realms of Chibiabos  
 Hither have we come to try you,  
 Hither have we come to warn you.

“Cries of grief and lamentation  
 Reach us in the Blessed Islands:  
 Cries of anguish from the living,  
 Calling back their friends departed,  
 Sadden us with useless sorrow.      170  
 Therefore have we come to try you;  
 No one knows us, no one heeds us.  
 We are but a burden to you,  
 And we see that the departed  
 Have no place among the living.      175

“Think of this, O Hiawatha!  
 Speak of it to all the people,  
 That henceforward and forever  
 They no more with lamentations  
 Sadden the souls of the departed  
 In the Islands of the Blessed.      180

“Do not lay such heavy burdens  
 In the graves of those you bury,  
 Not such weight of furs and wampum,  
 Not such weight of pots and kettles,  
 For the spirits faint beneath them.      185

Only give them food to carry,  
Only give them fire to light them.

“Four days is the spirit’s journey  
To the land of ghosts and shadows,  
Four its lonely night encampments;  
Four times must their fires be lighted.  
Therefore, when the dead are buried,  
Let a fire, as night approaches,      200  
Four times on the grave be kindled,  
That the soul upon its journey  
May not lack the cheerful fire-light,  
May not grope about in darkness.

“Farewell, noble Hiawatha!      205  
We have put you to the trial,  
To the proof have put your patience,  
By the insult of our presence,  
By the outrage of our actions.

We have found you great and noble.      210  
Fail not in the greater trial,  
Faint not in the harder struggle.”

When they ceased, a sudden darkness  
Fell and filled the silent wigwam.  
Hiawatha heard a rustle      215  
As of garments trailing by him,  
Heard the curtain of the doorway

Lifted by a hand he saw not,  
Felt the cold breath of the night air,  
For a moment saw the starlight;  
But he saw the ghosts no longer,  
Saw no more the wandering spirits  
From the kingdom of Ponemah,  
From the land of the Hereafter.

220





*Indian Baskets, Decorated with Feathers and Quills.*

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## XX.

### THE FAMINE.

THE long and dreary  
Winter!  
O the cold and cruel  
Winter!  
Ever thicker, thicker,  
thicker

Froze the ice on lake and river,  
Ever deeper, deeper, deeper.  
Fell the snow o'er all the landscape,  
Fell the covering snow, and drifted  
Through the forest, round the village.

Hardly from his buried wigwam  
Could the hunter force a passage;  
With his mittens and his snow-shoes

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Vainly walked he through the forest,  
 Sought for bird or beast and found none,  
 Saw no track of deer or rabbit,  
 In the snow beheld no footprints,                  15  
 In the ghastly, gleaming forest  
 Fell, and could not rise from weakness,  
 Perished there from cold and hunger,

O the famine and the fever!  
 O the wasting of the famine!                  20  
 O the blasting of the fever!  
 O the wailing of the children!  
 O the anguish of the women!

All the earth was sick and famished;  
 Hungry was the air around them,                  25  
 Hungry was the sky above them,  
 And the hungry stars in heaven  
 Like the eyes of wolves glared at them!

Into Hiawatha's wigwam  
 Came two other guests as silent                  30  
 As the ghosts were, and as gloomy,  
 Waited not to be invited,  
 Did not parley at the doorway,  
 Sat there without word of welcome  
 In the seat of Laughing Water;                  35  
 Looked with haggard eyes and hollow

**At the face of Laughing Water.**

And the foremost said: "Behold me!  
**I am Famine, Bukadawin!"**

And the other said: "Behold me!  
**I am Fever, Ahkosewin!"**

And the lovely Minnehaha,  
Shuddered as they looked upon her,  
Shuddered at the words they uttered,  
Lay down on her bed in silence,  
Hid her face, but made no answer;  
Lay there trembling, freezing, burning  
At the looks they cast upon her,  
At the fearful words they uttered.

Forth into the empty forest  
Rushed the maddened Hiawatha;  
In his heart was deadly sorrow,  
In his face a stony firmness;  
On his brow the sweat of anguish  
Started, but it froze and fell not.

Wrapped in furs and armed for hunting,  
With his mighty bow of ash-tree,  
With his quiver full of arrows,  
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,  
Into the vast and vacant forest  
**On his snow-shoes strode he forward.**

42

45

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60

“Gitche Manitou, the Mighty!”  
**Cried he with his face uplifted**  
**In that bitter hour of anguish,**  
 “Give your children food, O father!  
 Give us food, or we must perish!  
 Give me food for Minnehaha,  
 For my dying Minnehaha!”

Through the far-resounding forest,  
 Through the forest vast and vacant  
 Rang that cry of desolation,  
 But there came no other answer  
 Than the echo of his crying,  
 Than the echo of the woodlands,  
 “Minnehaha! Minnehaha!”

All day long roved Hiawatha  
 In that melancholy forest,  
 Through the shadow of whose thickets,  
 In the pleasant days of Summer,  
 Of that ne'er forgotten Summer,  
 He had brought his young wife homeward  
 From the land of the Dacotahs;  
 When the birds sang in the thickets,  
 And the streamlets laughed and glistened,  
 And the air was full of fragrance,  
 And the lovely Laughing Water

Said with voice that did not tremble,  
“I will follow you, my husband!”

In the wigwam with Nokomis,  
With those gloomy guests that watched  
her,

90

With the Famine and the Fever,  
She was lying, the Beloved,  
She the dying Minnehaha.

“Hark!” she said; “I hear a rushing,  
Hear a roaring and a rushing,  
Hear the Falls of Minnehaha  
Calling to me from a distance!”  
“No, my child!” said old Nokomis,  
“T is the night-wind in the pine-trees!”

“Look!” she said; “I see my father   100  
Standing lonely at his doorway,  
Beckoning to me from his wigwam  
In the land of the Dacotahs!”  
“No, my child!” said old Nokomis,  
“T is the smoke, that waves and beck-  
ons!”

105

“Ah!” said she, “the eyes of Pauguk  
Glare upon me in the darkness,  
I can feel his icy fingers  
Clasping mine amid the darkness!

Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

114

And the desolate Hiawatha,  
Far away amid the forest,  
Miles away among the mountains,  
Heard that sudden cry of anguish,  
Heard the voice of Minnehaha  
Calling to him in the darkness,  
"Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

115

Over snow-fields waste and pathless,  
Under snow-encumbered branches,  
Homeward hurried Hiawatha,  
Empty-handed, heavy-hearted,  
Heard Nokomis moaning, wailing:  
"Wahonowin! Wahonowin!  
Would that I had perished for you,  
Would that I were dead as you are!  
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!"

125

And he rushed into the wigwam,  
Saw the old Nokomis slowly  
Rocking to and fro and moaning,  
Saw his lovely Minnehaha  
Lying dead and cold before him,  
And his bursting heart within him  
Uttered such a cry of anguish,  
That the forest moaned and shuddered,

130

That the very stars in heaven  
Shook and trembled with his anguish. 135

Then he sat down, still and speechless,  
On the bed of Minnehaha,  
At the feet of Laughing Water,  
At those willing feet, that never  
More would lightly run to meet him, 140  
Never more would lightly follow.

With both hands his face he covered,  
Seven long days and nights he sat there,  
As if in a swoon he sat there,  
Speechless, motionless, unconscious  
Of the daylight or the darkness. 145

Then they buried Minnehaha;  
In the snow a grave they made her,  
In the forest deep and darksome,  
Underneath the moaning hemlocks; 150  
Clothed her in her richest garments,  
Wrapped her in her robes of ermine,  
Covered her with snow, like ermine;  
Thus they buried Minnehaha. 155

And at night a fire was lighted,  
On her grave four times was kindled,  
For her soul upon its journey  
To the Islands of the Blessed.

- From his doorway Hiawatha                            160  
 Saw it burning in the forest,  
 Lighting up the gloomy hemlocks;  
 From his sleepless bed uprising,  
 From the bed of Minnehaha,  
 Stood and watched it at the doorway,                    165  
 That it might not be extinguished,  
 Might not leave her in the darkness.  
 "Farewell!" said he, "Minnehaha!  
 Farewell, O my Laughing Water!  
 All my heart is buried with you,                    170  
 All my thoughts go onward with you!  
 Come not back again to labor,  
 Come not back again to suffer,  
 Where the Famine and the Fever  
 Wear the heart and waste the body.                    175  
 Soon my task will be completed,  
 Soon your footsteps I shall follow  
 To the Islands of the Blessed,  
 To the Kingdom of Ponemah,  
 To the Land of the Hereafter!"                        180



## XXI.

### THE WHITE MAN'S FOOT.

N his lodge beside a  
river,  
Close beside a frozen  
river,

Sat an old man, sad and lonely.  
White his hair was as a snow-drift;  
Dull and low his fire was burning,  
And the old man shook and trembled,  
Folded in his Waubewyon,  
In his tattered white-skin-wrapper,  
Hearing nothing but the tempest

9

As it roared along the forest,  
Seeing nothing but the snow-storm,  
As it whirled and hissed and drifted.

All the coals were white with ashes,  
And the fire was slowly dying,  
As a young man, walking lightly,  
At the open doorway entered.

Red with blood of youth his cheeks were,  
Soft his eyes, as stars in Spring-time,  
Bound his forehead was with grasses,  
Bound and plumed with scented grasses;      50  
On his lips a smile of beauty,  
Filling all the lodge with sunshine,  
In his hand a bunch of blossoms  
Filling all the lodge with sweetness.

"Ah, my son!" exclaimed the old man,      55  
"Happy are my eyes to see you.  
Sit here on the mat beside me,  
Sit here by the dying embers,  
Let us pass the night together.  
Tell me of your strange adventures,      60  
Of the lands where you have travelled;  
I will tell you of my prowess,  
Of my many deeds of wonder."

From his pouch he drew his peace-pipe,

## THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

237

- Very old and strangely fashioned; 35  
Made of red stone was the pipe-head,  
And the stem a reed with feathers;  
Filled the pipe with bark of willow,  
Placed a burning coal upon it,  
Gave it to his guest, the stranger, 4C  
And began to speak in this wise:  
“When I blow my breath about me,  
When I breathe upon the landscape,  
Motionless are all the rivers,  
Hard as stone becomes the water!” 45
- And the young man answered, smiling:  
“When I blow my breath about me,  
When I breathe upon the landscape,  
Flowers spring up o'er all the meadows,  
Singing, onward rush the rivers!” 50
- “When I shake my hoary tresses,”  
Said the old man, darkly frowning.  
“All the land with snow is covered;  
All the leaves from all the branches  
Fall and fade and die and wither, 55  
For I breathe, and lo! they are not.  
From the waters and the marshes  
Rise the wild goose and the heron,  
Fly away to distant regions,

For I speak, and lo! they are not. 60

And where'er my footsteps wander,  
All the wild beasts of the forest  
Hide themselves in holes and caverns,  
And the earth becomes as flintstone!"

"When I shake my flowing ringlets," 65

Said the young man, softly laughing,  
"Showers of rain fall warm and welcome,  
Plants lift up their heads rejoicing,  
Back unto their lakes and marshes  
Come the wild goose and the heron, 70  
Homeward shoots the arrowy swallow,  
Sing the bluebird and the robin,  
And where'er my footsteps wander,  
All the meadows wave with blossoms,  
All the woodlands ring with music, 75  
All the trees are dark with foliage!"

While they spake, the night departed:

From the distant realms of Wabun,  
From his shining lodge of silver,  
Like a warrior robed and painted, 80  
Came the sun, and said, "Behold me!  
Gheezis, the great sun, behold me!"

Then the old man's tongue was speechless  
And the air grew warm and pleasant,

And upon the wigwam sweetly  
Sang the bluebird and the robin,  
And the stream began to murmur,  
And a scent of growing grasses  
Through the lodge was gently wafted.

And Segwun, the youthful stranger,  
More distinctly in the daylight  
Saw the icy face before him;  
It was Peboan, the Winter!

From his eyes the tears were flowing,  
As from melting lakes the streamlets,  
And his body shrunk and dwindled  
As the shouting sun ascended,  
Til into the air it faded,  
Till into the ground it vanished,  
And the young man saw before him,  
On the hearth-stone of the wigwam,  
Where the fire had smoked and smouldered,  
Saw the earliest flower of Spring-time,  
Saw the Beauty of the Spring-time,  
Saw the Miskodeed in blossom.

Thus it was that in the North-land  
After that unheard-of coldness,  
That intolerable Winter,  
Came the Spring with all its splendor,

85

90

95

100

105

All its birds and all its blossoms,                    110  
All its flowers and leaves and grasses.

Sailing on the wind to northward,  
Flying in great flocks, like arrows,  
Like huge arrows shot through heaven,  
Passed the swan, the Mahnahbezee,                    115  
Speaking almost as a man speaks;  
And in long lines waving, bending  
Like a bow-string snapped asunder,  
Came the white goose, Waw-be-wawa;  
And in pairs, or singly flying,                    120  
Mahng the loon, with clangorous pinions,  
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa.

In the thickets and the meadows  
Piped the bluebird, the Owaissa,                    125  
On the summit of the lodges  
Sang the Opechee, the robin,  
In the covert of the pine-trees  
Cooed the pigeon, the Omemee,  
And the sorrowing Hiawatha,                    130  
Speechless in his infinite sorrow,  
Heard their voices calling to him,  
Went forth from his gloomy doorway,  
Stood and gazed into the heaven,

Gazed upon the earth and waters.

135

From his wanderings far to eastward,  
From the regions of the morning,  
From the shining land of Wabun,  
Homeward now returned Iagoo,  
The great traveller, the great boaster,  
Full of new and strange adventures,  
Marvels many and many wonders.

140

And the people of the village  
Listened to him as he told them  
Of his marvellous adventures,  
Laughing answered him in this wise:  
“Ugh! it is indeed Iagoo!  
No one else beholds such wonders!”

145

He had seen, he said, a water  
Bigger than the Big-Sea-Water,  
Broader than the Gitche Gumee,  
Bitter so that none could drink it!  
At each other looked the warriors,  
Looked the women at each other,  
Smiled, and said, “It cannot be so!  
Kaw!” they said, “it cannot be so!”

150

O'er it, said he, o'er this water  
Came a great canoe with pinions,  
A canoe with wings came flying,

155

Bigger than a grove of pine-trees,  
Taller than the tallest tree-tops!  
And the old men and the women  
Looked and tittered at each other;  
“Kaw!” they said, “we don’t believe it!”

From its mouth, he said, to greet him, 165  
Came Waywassimo, the lightning,  
Came the thunder, Annemeekie!  
And the warriors and the women  
Laughed aloud at poor Iagoo;

“Kaw!” they said, “what tales you tell us!” 170

In it, said he, came a people,  
In the great canoe with pinions  
Came, he said, a hundred warriors;  
Painted white were all their faces,  
And with hair their chins were covered! 175  
And the warriors and the women  
Laughed and shouted in derision,  
Like the ravens on the tree-tops,  
Like the crows upon the hemlocks.

“Kaw!” they said, “what lies you tell us! 180  
Do not think that we believe them!”

Only Hiawatha laughed not,  
But he gravely spake and answered  
**To** their jeering and their jesting:

"True is all Iagoo tells us; 185  
I have seen it in a vision,  
Seen the great canoe with pinions,  
Seen the people with white faces,  
Seen the coming of this bearded  
People of the wooden vessel  
From the regions of the morning,  
From the shining land of Wabun.

"Gitche Manito the Mighty,  
The Great Spirit, the Creator,  
Sends them hither on his errand,  
Sends them to us with his message.  
Wheresoe'er they move, before them  
Swarms the stinging fly, the Ahmo,  
Swarms the bee, the honey-maker;  
Wheresoe'er they tread, beneath them  
Springs a flower unknown among us,  
Springs the White-man's Foot in blossom.

"Let us welcome, then, the strangers,  
Hail them as our friends and brothers,  
And the heart's right hand of friendship 203  
Give them when they come to see us.  
Gitche Manito, the Mighty,  
Said this to me in my vision.

"I beheld, too, in that vision

All the secrets of the future,  
Of the distant days that shall be.  
I beheld the westward marches  
Of the unknown, crowded nations.  
All the land was full of people,  
Restless, struggling, toiling, striving,  
Speaking many tongues, yet feeling  
But one heart-beat in their bosoms.  
In the woodlands rang their axes,  
Smoked their towns in all the valleys,  
Over all the lakes and rivers  
Rushed their great canoes of thunder.

"Then a darker, drearier vision  
Passed before me, vague and cloud-like:  
I beheld our nation scattered,  
All forgetful of my counsels,  
Weakened, warring with each other;  
Saw the remnants of our people  
Sweeping westward, wild and woful,  
Like the cloud-rack of a tempest,  
Like the withered leaves of Autumn!"



## XXII.

### HIAWATHA'S DEPARTURE.

Y the shore of Gitche  
Gumee,  
By the shining Big-  
Sea-Water,  
At the doorway of his  
wigwam,

In the pleasant summer morning,

Hiawatha stood and waited.

5

All the air was full of freshness,

All the earth was bright and joyous,

And before him, through the sunshine,  
Westward toward the neighboring forest  
Passed in golden swarms the Ahmo,      10  
Passed the bees, the honey-makers,  
Burning, singing in the sunshine.

Bright above him shone the heavens,  
Level spread the lake before him;  
From its bosom leaped the sturgeon,      15  
Sparkling, flashing in the sunshine;  
On its margin the great forest  
Stood reflected in the water,  
Every tree-top had its shadow,  
Motionless beneath the water.      20

From the brow of Hiawatha  
Gone was every trace of sorrow,  
As the fog from off the water,  
As the mist from off the meadow.  
With a smile of joy and triumph,      25  
With a look of exultation,  
As of one who in a vision  
Sees what is to be, but is not,  
Stood and waited Hiawatha.

Toward the sun his hands were lifted,      30  
Both the palms spread out against it,  
And between the parted fingers

Fell the sunshine on his features,  
Flecked with light his naked shoulders,  
As it falls and flecks an oak-tree  
Through the rifted leaves and branches.

35

O'er the water floating, flying,  
Something in the hazy distance,  
Something in the mists of morning,  
Loomed and lifted from the water,  
Now seemed floating, now seemed flying,  
Coming nearer, nearer, nearer.

40

Was it Shingebis the diver?  
Was it the pelican, the Shada?  
Or the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah?  
Or the white goose, Waw-be-wawa,  
With the water dripping, flashing  
From its glossy neck and feathers?

45

It was neither goose nor diver,  
Neither pelican nor heron,  
O'er the water, floating, flying,  
Through the shining mist of morning,  
But a birch canoe with paddles,  
Rising, sinking on the water,  
Dripping, flashing in the sunshine;  
And within it came a people  
From the distant land of Wabun,

50

55

**248** THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

From the farthest realms of morning  
Came the Black-Robe chief, the Prophet,  
He the Priest of Prayer, the Pale-face,      **60**  
With his guides and his companions.

And the noble Hiawatha,  
With his hands aloft extended,  
Held aloft in sign of welcome,  
Waited, full of exultation,      **65**  
Till the birch canoe with paddles  
Grated on the shining pebbles,  
Stranded on the sandy margin,  
Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face,  
With the cross upon his bosom,      **70**  
Landed on the sandy margin.

Then the joyous Hiawatha  
Cried aloud and spake in this wise:  
“Beautiful is the sun, O strangers,  
When you come so far to see us!      **75**  
All our town in peace awaits you;  
All our doors stand open for you;  
You shall enter all our wigwams,  
For the heart’s right hand we give you.

“Never bloomed the earth so gayly,      **80**  
Never shone the sun so brightly,  
As to-day they shine and blossom

When you come so far to see us!  
Never was our lake so tranquil,  
Nor so free from rocks and sand-bars;      85  
For your birch canoe in passing  
Has removed both rock and sand-bar.

"Never before had our tobacco  
Such a sweet and pleasant flavor,  
Never the broad leaves of our corn-fields      90  
Were so beautiful to look on,  
As they seem to us this morning,  
When you come so far to see us!"

And the Black-Robe chief made answer,  
Stammered in his speech a little,      95  
Speaking words yet unfamiliar:  
"Peace be with you, Hiawatha,  
Peace be with you and your people,  
Peace of prayer, and peace of pardon,  
Peace of Christ, and joy of Mary!"      100

Then the generous Hiawatha  
Led the strangers to his wigwam,  
Seated them on skins of bison,  
Seated them on skins of ermine,  
And the careful old Nokomis      105  
Brought them food in bowls of bass-wood,  
Water brought in birchen dippers,

NAVAJO MATRON WEAVING A BLANKET.



*"Bring a wife with nimble fingers,  
Heart and hand that move together."*

And the calumet, the peace-pipe,  
Filled and lighted for their smoking.

All the old men of the village,  
All the warriors of the nation,  
All the Jossakeeds, the prophets,  
The magicians, the Wabenos,  
And the medicine-men, the Medas,  
Came to bid the strangers welcome;

"It is well," they said, "O brothers,  
That you come so far to see us;"

In a circle round the doorway,  
With their pipes they sat in silence,  
Waiting to behold the strangers,  
Waiting to receive their message;  
Till the Black-Robe chief, the Pale-face,  
From the wigwam came to greet them,  
Stammering in his speech a little,  
Speaking words yet unfamiliar;

"It is well," they said, "O brother,  
That you come so far to see us!"

Then the Black-Robe chief, the prophet,  
Told his message to the people,  
Told the purport of his mission,  
Told them of the Virgin Mary,  
And her blessed Son, the Saviour,

How in distant lands and ages  
 He had lived on earth as we do;  
 How he fasted, prayed, and labored;      135  
 How the Jews, the tribe accursed,  
 Mocked him, scourged him, crucified him;  
 How he rose from where they laid him,  
 Walked again with his disciples,  
 And ascended into heaven.      140

And the chiefs made answer, saying:  
 "We have listened to your message,  
 We have heard your words of wisdom,  
 We will think on what you tell us.  
 It is well for us, O brothers,      145  
 That you come so far to see us!"

Then they rose up and departed  
 Each one homeward to his wigwam,  
 To the young men and the women  
 Told the story of the strangers      150  
 Whom the Master of Life had sent them  
 From the shining land of Wabun.

Heavy with the heat and silence  
 Grew the afternoon of Summer,  
 With a drowsy sound the forest      155  
 Whispered round the sultry wigwam,  
 With a sound of sleep the water

Rippled on the beach below it;  
From the corn-fields shrill and ceaseless  
Sang the grasshopper, Pah-puk-keena; 160  
And the guests of Hiawatha,  
Weary with the heat of Summer,  
Slumbered in the sultry wigwam.

Slowly o'er the simmering landscape  
Fell the evening's dusk and coolness, 165  
And the long and level sunbeams  
Shot their spears into the forest,  
Breaking through its shields of shadow,  
Rushed into each secret ambush,  
Searched each thicket, dingle, hollow; 170  
Still the guests of Hiawatha  
Slumbered in the silent wigwam.

From his place rose Hiawatha,  
Bade farewell to old Nokomis,  
Spake in whispers, spake in this wise, 175  
Did not wake the guests, that slumbered:

"I am going, O Nokomis,  
On a long and distant journey,  
To the portals of the Sunset,  
To the regions of the home-wind, 180  
Of the Northwest wind, Keewaydin.  
But these guests I leave behind me,

In your watch and ward I leave them;  
 See that never harm comes near them,  
 See that never fear molests them,  
 Never danger nor suspicion,  
 Never want of food or shelter,  
 In the lodge of Hiawatha!"

Forth into the village went he,  
 Bade farewell to all the warriors,      185  
 Bade farewell to all the young men,  
 Spake persuading, spake in this wise:

"I am going, O my people,  
 On a long and distant journey;  
 Many moons and many winters      195  
 Will have come, and will have vanished,  
 Ere I come again to see you.  
 But my guests I leave behind me;  
 Listen to their words of wisdom,  
 Listen to the truth they tell you,      200  
 For the Master of Life has sent them  
 From the land of light and morning!"

On the shore stood Hiawatha,  
 Turned and waved his hand at parting;  
 On the clear and luminous water      205  
 Launched his birch canoe for sailing,  
 From the pebbles of the margin

Shoved it forth into the water;  
Whispered to it, "Westward! westward!"  
And with speed it darted forward. 210

And the evening sun descending  
Set the clouds on fire with redness,  
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,  
Left upon the level water  
One long track and trail of splendor. 215  
Down whose stream, as down a river,  
Westward, westward Hiawatha  
Sailed into the fiery sunset,  
Sailed into the purple vapors,  
Sailed into the dusk of evening. 220

And the people from the margin  
Watched him floating, rising, sinking,  
Till the birch canoe seemed lifted  
High into that sea of splendor,  
Till it sank into the vapors 225  
Like the new moon slowly, slowly  
Sinking in the purple distance.

And they said, "Farewell forever!"  
Said, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"  
And the forests, dark and lonely, 230  
Moved through all their depths of darkness,  
Sighed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"

And the waves upon the margin  
Rising, rippling on the pebbles,  
Sobbed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"  
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,  
From her haunts among the fen-lands  
Screamed, "Farewell, O Hiawatha!"

235

Thus departed Hiawatha,

Hiawatha the Beloved,  
In the glory of the sunset,  
In the purple mists of evening,  
To the regions of the home-wind,  
Of the Northwest wind, Keewaydin,  
To the Islands of the Blessed,  
To the kingdom of Ponemah,  
To the land of the Hereafter!

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